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A very British meeting agrees to disagree over the economy

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THERE was intense negotiation, much impassioned disagreement but no smoke-filled room: none of the Seven Wise Men indulge. In truth, the first formal meeting of the Treasury's new forecasting panel seem to have been a very British affair: polite and rather earnest, egos restrained for the greater good of "useful public debate".

The seven members of the panel, representing the middle ground and both extremes of economic ideology, were united in a dutiful sense of trying to do the best job they could and fulfil the brief given to them by the Treasury. Alan Budd, chief economic adviser to the Treasury, was there

to "shut people up if they were going on" but, for anyone expecting fireworks, resignations and seething discontent, it has all been a bit of a disappointment.

Far from exposing their differences, the formation of the forecasting panel has probably drawn the men closer together. They do not agree with each other any more than they ever did, but they are certainly seeing a lot more of each other than before, not least because they are becoming ever more frequent visitors to television and radio studios.

Andrew Britton, a tall, slim and rather serious-looking man, coyly admitted yesterday that he had been on BBC radio at lunchtime — with his fellow panel member Tim Congdon — and was off to the Newsnight studios for the evening.

The Seven Wise Men are becoming the economic media stars of the 1990s, leaving the teenage scribblers and sound-bite experts of the last decade to get on with their work in the City.

The two men who symbolise the opposite ends of the economic spectrum and probably have the most potential for a dust-up are Wynne Godley, the veteran Keynesian from Cambridge, so disapproved of by Mrs Thatcher that she cut off his group's research funding, and Patrick Minford, the arch free-marketeer from the University of Liverpool whose views always found a sympathetic ear in the Conservative party of the 1980s. But all was sweetness and light.

"He's a very clever man," Professor Godley said of Professor

Minford. "We look at the world through spectacles of a completely different tint, but neither of us is insane. We are both looking at the same black hole in the British economy."

Both are markedly more pessimistic about prospects for the economy this year than their colleagues. Professor Godley predicts growth of only 0.5 percentage points and Professor Minford forecasts almost no recovery at all with growth of 0.2 of a percentage point. Thereafter, their views could not be more different.

The outspoken Liverpool monetarist trusts to Mrs Thatcher's supply-side improvements and the natural forces of the free market, and believes that the economy will grow by three percentage points next year. Professor Godley is

going for only 1.4 percentage points' growth in 1994 and remains true to his catastrophic vision of a Britain which no longer manufactures enough to pay its own way in the world.

Without a large change in the trend of export shares and import penetration, "the nation will be condemned to endemic recession: an expansion of output fast enough to reduce unemployment would cause the deficit to rise far beyond what can be financed by foreign direct investment (or in any other way), with a danger of ever-rising foreign debt," says paragraph 19 of the report, one of several written by Professor Godley and which was, at his insistence, included in the final report.

It was the redoubtable professor

from Cambridge who provided some much-needed excitement, admitting that he reacted violently when he saw the first draft of the report. This was written by Treasury officials after the panel's main forecasting session on February 9. It had attempted to pull together the disparate views discussed and give an average forecast, quite unacceptable to Professor Godley, who faxed through an alternative version of the draft, highlighting much more extensively where different panel members differed and why.

Many sections of the alternative draft were adopted at an all-day rewriting session on Tuesday, punctuated by what was, by all accounts, a modestly boozy lunch of pork chops and a choice of wine in the Treasury's executive car-

teen. Professor Godley was still disappointed and quoted in Latin the phrase: "The mountains were laboured and a ridiculous mouse was born."

His main concern is that the panel should debate the deeper and longer-term structural problems in the economy and yesterday's report pledged to do this when it next meets in four months' time.

This is when the panel's philosophical differences will become most acute and the very British desire to build consensus be most sorely tested. The Treasury may have to unlock the port and brandy cupboard for some evening sessions next time round.

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Tax warning, page 21

Major accused of Maastricht contempt

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

OPPOSITION leaders yesterday accused the prime minister of contempt of Parliament for failing to publish the government's legal advice on the Maastricht Treaty.

Ministers, meanwhile, underlined the government's nervousness about the bill by mounting a concerted defence of the treaty, which is expected to continue throughout the weekend. Tristan Garel-Jones, the European affairs minister, issued a warning of the "body blow" on jobs and investment if Britain failed to sign the treaty. "The cost of non-Maastricht would be lost jobs," he said.

Today Douglas Hurd will outline the long-term consequences of isolation if Britain does not go ahead with the 11 other EC countries. He will emphasise the influence Britain has had in shaping the treaty, such as resisting centralisation, and on other Community issues, including policies towards central and eastern Europe.

Speaking at the Conservative Political Centre European Conference in Oxfordshire, the foreign secretary will warn of the dire consequences of being sidelined and of adopting the social chapter.

Sir Leon Brittan, the EC's foreign trade commissioner, delivered a similar message in Liverpool yesterday, emphasising the benefits of signing the treaty.

The clear message that the government is still vulnerable over Maastricht came as John Smith and Paddy Ashdown said that they would continue to press for the detailed legal opinion given by the law officers and the Foreign Office on the social chapter amendment.

Mr Smith argued that the prime minister's refusal to reveal why the law officers had overturned advice from For-

eign Office lawyers over amendment 27 was totally inconsistent with his drive for open government.

On Monday Labour will call for a second debate on amendment 27, which seeks to end Britain's opt-out from the social chapter, in the light of the new legal advice. If accepted, that will further delay the committee stage of the bill.

In a letter sent to Mr Smith on Thursday night, Mr Major insisted that Mr Hurd had set out the legal opinion in the Commons earlier this week. "If the House of Commons wishes to have further advice on the meaning and effect of the bill, law officers will be present when the committee stage of the bill resumes."

Mr Smith said that Mr Major had given no good reason for failing to publish the advice. "Your attitude is all too typical of the secretive nature of British government, which cries out for reform," he wrote in a letter to the prime minister.

Mr Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said he now had the legal opinion of one of Britain's foremost European and constitutional lawyers, Anthony Lester QC, which flatly contradicted the government's views.

"The government has shown a disgraceful contempt for Parliament, for the open government it claims to espouse and for the democratic process itself by refusing to make public their legal advice," Mr Ashdown said. By refusing to publish its reply in full, or even providing reasons to support it, the government was asking Parliament to accept its advice on trust, he argued. "As far as the government is concerned the right attitude of Parliament should be guilty until proven innocent."

Mr Garel-Jones earlier in-

sisted that 500 MPs of all parties supported its ratification and that the rebels had failed to come up with any alternative. "A small minority of members of parliament after these weeks and months of debate have still been unable to tell us what they want," he said in a statement.

Every political party except the Ulster Unionists thought the treaty should be ratified, he added. "Maastricht is also about jobs, investment and money," he said. "Nobody should underestimate the body blow it would be for Britain if we were to take up a semi-detached position as far as Europe is concerned."

Sir Leon told the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce that Britain's foreign policy objectives would be enhanced under the treaty and there would be close justice and home affairs co-operation to control illegal immigration and international crime to fight drugs and terrorism.

"To reject the treaty would do enormous damage to our standing in Europe and would cause substantial economic harm because of the immense disruption it would bring about all over Europe."

Last night Mr Major sent a second letter to Mr Smith offering him a Privy Council briefing. "You have in recent weeks publicly questioned the government's regard for the impartiality of the civil service. Your care for the impartiality of the civil service seems to disappear when you think there might be political advantage to be had," Mr Major said. "If you, as Leader of the Opposition, wish to be briefed about the advice of the Foreign Office lawyers, I am happy to arrange that on privacy and confidentiality terms. But it would damage the impartiality of the Civil Service if their advice were made public."



Campaigning on: Janet Booth outside the Commons yesterday with a picture of her executed grandfather

Pardons plea fails

Continued from page 1
for a co-authored book called *Shot at Dawn*, said: "The court martial said Harry Farr tried to escape but in fact he just fell apart in a nervous collapse. He had been in hospital for five months from a previous collapse and should never have been returned."

The cases of the 307 executed soldiers were taken up by Andrew MacKinlay, Labour MP for Thurrock. He said yesterday he would continue the fight to clear their names.

Mr Major said: "No evidence was found to lead us, including the judge advocate-general, to think that the convictions were unsound or that the accused were treated unfairly at the time."

In 1918, Private Arthur Biggs, of the Scots and Derby Regiment, was executed after staying beyond his allotted seven days' leave at home. That week he had married.

Campaigners lose fight to stop road through forest

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

ATTEMPTS by countryside campaigners to stop the government driving a six-lane highway through the 8,000-year-old Oxleas Wood, the last expanse of ancient forest around London, failed in the High Court yesterday.

The court rejected a claim by nine local residents and the borough of Greenwich that the government had acted unlawfully in offering a stretch of nearby farmland in exchange for the section of the wood that will be destroyed by the road.

Friends of the Earth said: "This judgment flies in the face of common sense and natural justice and shows that the secretary of state has the discretion to bulldoze our best wildlife sites at will."

David Black, of the res-

dent's group that bought the case, said: "We will pursue this to the Appeal Court if we can get the money." In reality, however, the campaign to save the wood, a designated "site of special scientific interest", now seems to be lost.

A separate legal challenge by Waltham Forest and Hackney councils against plans to build a six-lane link road between Hackney and the M11, which would pass through part of Epping Forest and require the demolition of 300 houses and flats, was also thrown out by the High Court yesterday.

Oxleas Wood, on the southern slopes of Shooter's Hill in Eltham, southeast London, had become the focus of intense opposition by environmental pressure groups to the

government's £20 billion road-building programme, which they say threatens areas of ecological importance.

The transport department says the East London River Crossing, which will cross the Thames via a new bridge east of Woolwich and pass through the eastern edge of Oxleas Wood to join the A2, is needed to complete an inner ring road around London and relieve growing traffic congestion.

At issue was whether Michael Heseltine, then environment secretary, had acted lawfully in November 1991, in issuing a certificate that avoided parliamentary discussion of a compulsory purchase order for the 25 acres of Oxleas Wood — 15 per cent of the total area — needed to build the road.

Explorer was close to death

Continued from page 1
much scenery to see to take your mind off it. After nine to ten weeks of thinking how you are going to mend the garage roof when you get back, you run out of things to think about."

Finally, Sir Ranulph said, he decided to "be sensible" and abandon the expedition before the final crossing of the Ross Ice shelf was complete. "If we had gone on, we probably would have faded out and died within a week," Sir Ranulph said. By then the two men were very weak. "We were getting colder and colder because we were so thin," Dr Stroud said. "We were on half-rations as we were trying to extend them and we were just not eating anywhere near enough. The potential danger we were in made us be sensible."

The two men had rested for only one day, when an 80-knot blizzard made progress impossible. For the rest, they walked for ten, sometimes 13 hours a day, pulling sledges loaded with 485lb of equipment and food. They hauled them up to 11,000ft above sea level before descending again. "I'm amazed we did it," said Sir Ranulph. "We were either lucky, or God was good to us." Yesterday both men looked well, if thin. Dr Stroud's fingers were still bandaged, and he warned that Sir Ranulph could face permanent damage to his feet at one stage in danger of septicemia. But he saluted as "extraordinary" the fact that a man approaching 50 had been able to complete the crossing of the continent.

The motivations for the expedition were many, Dr Stroud said. "We wanted to help the Multiple Sclerosis Society, we wanted to get scientific data, and you learn a lot about yourself and your own life. It's the same pleasure as climbing Snowdon, but it's just on a different scale."

Sir Ranulph was more prosaic he did it, he said, as a way of making a living. He would have preferred to be commanding officer of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, as his father had been, but he hadn't got enough A levels. "I wouldn't be able to pay the bills if I didn't do expeditions," he said. Now he plans to get away from it all on a holiday planned by his wife, Ginny. They are going skiing.

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Manchester bids to stage world chess

Manchester has made an offer to stage the World Chess Championship between Nigel Short, who comes from Lancashire, and Garry Kasparov. An unconditional bid, thought to be about £1.25 million, has been submitted by Manchester airport for the right to host Short's challenge against the world champion later this year.

A spokesman for the airport said: "We believe we are the only ones now in the race." The bid, which had to be more than £500,000 to meet the International Chess Federation's requirements, was made against the background of Manchester's battle to host the Olympics in 2000. If the bid is successful the venue will be the Royal Exchange theatre. The federation is to make its decision on Monday. Bids from Spain and a Serbian bank have been rejected.

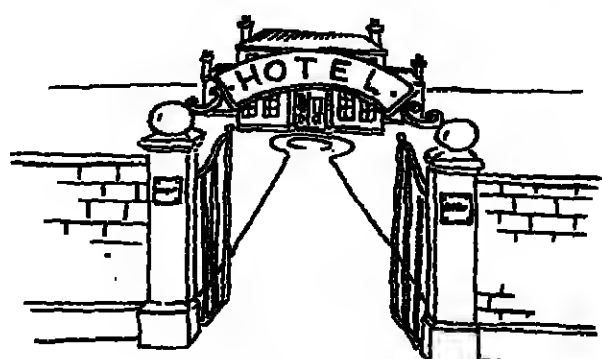
More horse attacks

Three more horses have been injured in serious attacks. A 16-year-old mare was slashed with a sharp instrument in a field near Grantham, Lincolnshire, leaving a three-inch gash in its sex organs. An eventing horse was wounded in an attack near Okehampton, Devon. The animal suffered a puncture wound to its right shoulder, which a vet said could not have been accidental. A terrified mare ran into a barbed wire fence after being pierced with a stake at Whitehill, Hampshire, yesterday.

IRA gun gang jailed

Three IRA men convicted at Belfast Crown Court this week of conspiracy to murder and possessing firearms with intent to endanger life, were each jailed for 24 years yesterday. Michael Bennett, 27, Oliver Masterson, 32, and Peter Lynch, 21, were in a hijacked taxi on a Belfast industrial estate in August 1991 when police stopped them.

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مكتبة الأصل

Patten offers concession to avert test boycott

■ The education secretary's promise not to publish results this year has taken some of the sting out of teaching unions' protests

BY BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION REPORTER

JOHN Patten, the education secretary, tried yesterday to avert a teachers' revolt over English tests for 14-year-olds by excluding this summer's results from national school league tables. The concession appeared to lessen opposition to the tests, which had united the profession and threatened the most widespread industrial action since the pay strikes of the mid-1980s.

Three teaching unions, including both head-teacher organisations, welcomed Mr Patten's change of heart and are likely to drop support for action. This has left isolated the National Union of Teachers and National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), which said that they would continue with plans to ballot members on boycotting the tests.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the NASUWT, said: "Mr Patten has done nothing to address the problem of teachers' workload and the nonsense of these tests. How the results are published is of exceptionally little importance."

Mr Patten announced the decision not to publish the results alongside plans for a large expansion of the performance league tables this year. For the first time the tables will include 19,000 primary schools and 2,000 independent schools in England and Wales, listing truancy rates as well as GCSE, A-level and some national curriculum test results. The results of some vocational qualifications, taken by young people at sixth-form and further education colleges, will also be included.

Mr Patten, who met teachers' leaders for talks on Tuesday, said that in future the results of national curriculum tests would not be included in

league tables until the year after their introduction. That rules out English and technology results this year.

But Mr Patten said he was determined that the English tests themselves would go ahead, with schools required to report individual results to parents and overall national results being made public. Teachers have complained that the tests are too narrow and poorly prepared, making the results worthless.

Mr Patten said on BBC Radio 4 that he had considered a range of views in making the decision, "because it was quite clear that some teachers were so nervous about the introduction of these tests — they have no reason to be nervous — that they were threatening non-cooperation and boycotts. I think this is most unfortunate so we have taken this decision, which will be broadly welcomed."

He underlined the importance of the tests to the government by highlighting the results of a survey showing that a third of further education students had reading skills poorer than those of a typical 14-year-old. "Had they been tested at 14 perhaps their problems could have been better identified and dealt with."

Russell Clarke, assistant general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said that Mr Patten's decision was a "significant step meeting our most immediate concern."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said that it effectively converted this summer's test into an unpublished national trial. "We expect the government to take on board schools' criticisms of the tests after they have been administered and marked."

College students fail in the basics

BY OUR EDUCATION REPORTER

ABOUT 40 per cent of students at further education colleges lack basic literacy and numeracy skills, according to a survey published yesterday.

The survey, by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit, was based on the results of a 20-minute test sat by more than 10,000 students at 12 colleges. The students, most aged 16-19 or older, were studying for A-levels, GCSEs and vocational qualifications. Researchers excluded weaker students already taking courses in basic literacy and numeracy skills, and English as a second language.

The literacy test required students to read a straightforward passage and fill in the blanks with suitable words. One in 20 students was judged to require "very considerable" help after falling short of the standard expected of a typical 11-year-old. Thirty-seven per cent had reading skills below those of 14-year-olds.

Students frequently could not spell words such as

"through", "accidents" and "from". Instead they produced alternatives including "throug", "threw", "true", "thoug", "therug", "aksidents" and "fom".

The results of the numeracy test were worse, with one in seven having serious difficulty with basic maths and another 47 per cent below the level expected of a 14-year-old.

Test questions included asking students what time they would set their video to start recording at 6.15pm and end at 7.30pm using a 24-hour clock, and how long the programme was. Students struggled most with questions testing their ability to work out sums they might face when shopping, such as calculating a ten per cent discount.

John Patten, the education secretary, said the figures showed unacceptable levels of illiteracy among young people leaving school.

Alan Wells, director of the unit, said the survey disclosed a larger than expected group of people whose skills were insufficient to meet the demands of the workplace.

GMTV drafts on board the man with the miracle rat

BY LOUISE HIDALGO

GREG Dyke, widely credited with helping to transform the ailing TV-am into the world's most profitable television company, was yesterday appointed chairman of its successor, GMTV, less than two months into his franchise.

The blunt-speaking chief executive of London Weekend Television, one of GMTV's five shareholders, will succeed Harry Roche, chief executive of The Guardian & Manchester Evening News, as chairman of the new holder of the breakfast-time franchise.

It was Mr Dyke who, as director of programmes at TV-am in the early 1980s, masterminded the "snap, crackle and pop" fare and the children's puppet Roland Rat, which were to become the station's hallmarks.

During his two-year tenure, audiences rose from 200,000 to 1.5 million. Roland Rat, who personified the station's plunge downmarket, became known in television lore as the only rat who ever saved a sinking ship.

Mr Dyke was quick to reject comparisons yesterday between GMTV, which took over the breakfast franchise on January 1, and the TV-am



Hoping for an upturn: Greg Dyke at yesterday's announcement that he is to take over as GMTV's chairman

of the early 1980s. "When I joined TV-am ten years ago, there were only two advertisers," he said. "Half the staff were crying in my office. We couldn't pay the bills and we had a pile of

writs. That was a crisis; this isn't." Mr Dyke admitted that GMTV's viewing figures to date had been "rather more disappointing" than he hoped, but added: "There is

no evidence yet that this thing is not a viable business. This is not a crisis, this is a change." GMTV went on the air knowing that it had to achieve at least the viewing figures of its predecessor if it was to

break into profit after paying the £34.6 million it had bid to win the franchise. However, ratings have fallen to less than 1.7 million — 15 per cent below target — partly due to the unexpected success of

Channel 4's *The Big Breakfast*. Presenters have been reshuffled and the programme's format retouched.

Mr Dyke would not be drawn on what specific changes his non-executive chairmanship might bring, but said that GMTV needed "more popular journalism" and "to feel more confident". "There have been too many interviews with stars on couches and not enough good topical stories," he said.

Mr Dyke also said that he would be seeking to change the station's much talked about "F" factor — now standing for "fanciability" — to mean "family appeal". He did not rule out the return of Roland Rat, although he doubted that it would happen.

Mr Dyke and Christopher Stoddart, GMTV's managing director, refused to comment on possible staff changes resulting from his appointment. Mr Dyke insisted that he would be offering only advice and ideas and would not be involved in running programming. "Television is about ideas. Great presenters cannot do anything if the programme isn't right."

Mr Dyke will combine his new role with his job at LWT.

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Castle man meets wall of resistance

BY JOHN SHAW

A SUFFOLK businessman who contravened ancient monument regulations by lowering a garden wall at a medieval ruin was fined £3,000 at Bury St Edmunds Crown Court yesterday.

Anthony Jackson, 38, reduced the modern brick and flint wall by 1ft 9in near his home at Mettingham Castle near Bungay, Suffolk. The castle, which was originally a fortified manor house, dates from the 13th century.

Jackson, who lives in a house in the grounds, denied executing work resulting in damage to a scheduled ancient monument, contrary to Section 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The wall ran alongside a

drive on which two other residents had right of way. Andrew Howarth, for the prosecution, said that, although the wall was of little historical value, having been built in the 1930s, it was protected along with the monument.

Jackson said in evidence that the wall interfered with the view from his house and he wanted to lower it by two courses for 40ft "so that we could see our garden". He described the wall as rather unattractive, capped with concrete and set with flints. He did not intend to demolish it.

He claimed that to suggest it was part of an ancient monument was "plainly ludicrous". He was ordered to pay costs of £896.

Society tempers justice with mercy in dealing with juvenile killers

Police adopt gentle touch with children

Juveniles convicted of murder are held in secure units offering stability and discipline few have experienced at home

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

EVERY year about 20 children aged between ten and 16 are convicted of murder or manslaughter in England and Wales. They have included an 11-year-old girl who battered and suffocated an 18-month-old baby to death and a 16-year-old who burned alive an elderly man.

Such brutal deaths generate nationwide revulsion and have fuelled public and parliamentary concern about violence and crime at a time when demands were already being made to give magistrates additional powers to deal with persistent offenders.

While most young offenders are dealt with through community-based punishment intended to tackle offending behaviour those convicted of murder and manslaughter are likely to join other disturbed children in 45 local-authority secure units, containing 270 places, and two youth treatment centres, Glenholme in Birmingham and St Charles in Brentwood, Essex, which have a further 70 places.

Ten is the youngest age at which a child can be charged with any crime in England and Wales. Below that, the law considers that they are not aware of the consequences of their actions. A child under ten who admitted killing someone would, in most cases, be taken into local authority care or secure accommodation.

Between ten and 14 a child is presumed not to know the difference between right and wrong and is therefore incapable of committing an offence. If a child is to be tried between those ages, the prosecution must prove that he or she knew that what they were doing was seriously wrong. Any child under 17 taken into custody about the killing of two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool must have an adult with them when they are questioned. The adult is there to look after the child's emotional and physical welfare and must counter-sign any statements of interviews. The child has the right to legal aid.

Albert Kirby, head of the serious crime squad in Merseyside, described the interviewing techniques used in questioning a ten-year-old suspect. "It's similar to when you are interviewing your own child. You have to be very gentle and very soft with them and you have to remember that they are ten years of age. It's just going to be a very long and very slow interview," he told BBC's *One O'Clock News*.

Children over the age of ten charged with murder or manslaughter would be tried at a crown court but their identity would not be disclosed unless the judge ordered it. Those convicted of very serious crimes such as murder and manslaughter are dealt with under section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and face indeterminate sentences, detained "at Her Majesty's pleasure".

Once found guilty of murder or manslaughter, as 14 ten to 16-year-olds were in 1991, the youngster would probably be put into local authority care while the Home Office and health department studied all the case papers and decided whether to send them to a secure unit or youth treatment centre. Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, must give her consent to any child under the age of 13 being put into this accommodation.

On arrival at St Charles youth treatment centre at Brentwood a convicted juvenile would be assessed for three months by educationalists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and care staff. The centre, surrounded by a secure perimeter fence, provides each child with a room of his or her own with secure, unbreakable windows but no bars. A daily regime starts at 7.30am and ends around 9pm when juveniles are locked into their rooms for the night.

They undergo up to five hours education a day plus psychological treatment to assist them to come to terms with what they have done and confront offending behaviour.



Cult crime: pictures of this 11-year-old joyrider, swaggering before the television cameras in Hartlepool last week, brought home to the rest of Britain that Two-ing - Taking Without the Owner's Consent - is finding

ever-younger exponents. It is the main juvenile criminal activity among the bored, usually jobless, teenagers of the North East. Last week, a 13-year-old from Sunderland, already known to be involved in 200 car crimes and who

was so small that he had to sit on a head-rest to drive, was sent to a secure unit in Romford, Essex. Police said that in the first 24 hours he was off the streets, car crime in the city centre dropped by 50 per cent.

Scots aim to keep young out of courts

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A CHILD who has committed murder in Scotland will not automatically go before a court. Any case involving a child under 12 has to have the personal approval of the Lord Advocate before going before a court. For children over that age approval must come from Crown counsel.

Whenever possible cases go before a children's hearing. Even though the age of criminal responsibility in Scotland is eight, two years younger than the rest of Britain, Scottish law emphasises the need

to decriminalise children and keep them out of court.

If a child is found guilty of culpable homicide in the Scottish courts, the sentence is likely to be detention in secure

accommodation without limit of time.

There is no life sentence for children in Scotland and there is no automatic right to parole after a set number of years. Once a child who has received such a sentence reaches the age of 16 he or she can be moved to a young offenders'

institution and then, after the age of 21, to an adult prison.

There are adults serving "without limit of time" sentences that they received as children. It is up to the Secretary of State for Scotland to decide when someone who has received such a sentence as a child can be released.

There are six institutions for child criminals in Scotland, some run by the Scottish Office, some run independently by organisations such as the church. Children in independent institutions who have been sentenced by the courts remain the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

A child can be detained in a place of safety, anything from a foster home to a secure remand centre, for up to 21 days pending a decision by the children's hearing. The children's hearing system deals with more than 90 per cent of cases involving youngsters and is unique to Scotland. The grounds on which a child can be brought before a children's hearing include truancy, children exposed to moral danger, children beyond the control of parents and children who are the victims of crime, as well as children who have committed an offence.

Children under 16 are considered for prosecution in court only where serious offences such as murder are involved or where disqualification from driving is possible. When the public interest al-

lows, children in these cases are referred to the Reporter, the official who deals with all cases involving children, by the Procurator Fiscal for a decision on a referral to a children's hearing.

In many instances, the Reporter will decide to call a children's hearing. This is a lay tribunal made up of three members of the Children's Panel, volunteers who are appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland. There are about 1,750 panel members who are each appointed initially for a period of five years.

In addition to the panel members, it is usual for the child to attend the hearing and both parents must attend. The parents and the child have the right to a representative each, usually a lawyer. The hearing is held in the child's home area and is informal. Usually social workers' reports on the child are given and often a report from the school. Medical and psychiatric reports can be requested.

A hearing cannot fine the child or the parents but all decisions made by it are legally binding on the child.

Credo

Smoothing the roads that lead to Rome

Geoffrey Kirk

BETWEEN bishops of the Church of England and groups of clergy opposed to women's ordination there has been a deal of plain speaking over the past two months. Bishops have pleaded or blustered; clergy, somewhere between grief and wrath, have responded with a forthrightness not common in clerical circles.

Now, at the height of the food, word comes from Westminster that the Cardinal is working to offer some sort of help and hospitality. Catholic-minded Anglicans, betrayed as they undoubtedly feel by the church they have served, and in the absence of firm leadership from even the bishops who voted with them, will look at the proposals from Rome with eager expectation.

What sort of package could the Roman Curia produce which would respect the integrity of both English Roman Catholics and Catholic Anglicans? An outline is beginning to emerge.

In the first place, the package would need to respect the sensibilities of Anglicans about the validity of their orders. Bishop Graham Leonard, for example, who has taken a leading role in negotiations thus far, is unlikely to find attractive a formula which obliges him to deny, publicly and unequivocally, all the confirmations, ordinations and celebrations which have marked a long and distinguished ministry.

There would also need to be some sort of acknowledgement of the particular problems of lay people, for whom individual submission and absorption into a community very different in ethos from the average Anglican parish would be difficult if not impossible. The transition would need to be made in groups which could be mutually supportive and which could retain that supportive identity within the Roman fellowship for as long as it was required.

A liturgy which was recognisably Anglican would be important to some, and a relaxation of the rules on clerical celibacy would need to operate, at least for a generation.

None of these is an insuperable problem for the Roman authorities; but each one might create local turbulence in a church which has its own tensions about liturgy and celibacy, which

once spoke with crushing clarity about the invalidity of Anglican ordinations, and where, in any case, there is a growing body of opinion which favours the ordination of women.

Anglicans who crossed the Tiber would need to do so with other things clear in their minds. They would need to accept that they were, in the Cardinal's own words, "submitting to the authority of the Holy Father". There has been much talk in the past few years of "Alternative Episcopal Oversight" - a solution to tie dissidents' problems just feasible in the rather louché world of Anglican ecclesiology.

They would be wise not to regard the so-called Roman Option as a variation on the same theme. Throughout Anglican history there has been a tendency to separate matters of faith and morals from matters of church order. That curious disjunction lies at the heart of their current problems; in Rome they would need to turn their backs on it.

They would also need to be clear that the concessions made them were only temporary. There is no room in this small, overcrowded island for a permanent "Unitate Church", trailing its coat tails for converts as church membership generally declines. Entry to the Roman Communion would need to be not at a single moment but by a process. And that process could never be an end in itself.

Will many Anglicans in the present crisis walk the path to Rome if it is made smooth and straight? The answer depends very much on the House of Bishops of the General Synod. They have failed, thus far, to come up with any suggestions which meet the needs of the dissentients, or to show even a rudimentary understanding of their difficulties.

In June, not long after the Low Week meeting of the Catholic hierarchy, the Anglican episcopate will have another bite at the cherry. It is the hope - but not the expectation - of some that, in a buyer's market, they may yet come up with something saleable.

The Rev Geoffrey Kirk is vicar of St Stephen's, Lewisham, southeast London.

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Girl who strangled two boys

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY

THE best-known precedent in recent years for children being charged with killing is that of Mary Bell, an 11-year-old from Newcastle upon Tyne who was found guilty of the manslaughter of two small boys in 1968.

Bell and a 13-year-old friend were charged with murdering Martin Brown, 4, and Brian Howe, 3, by strangling them. The prosecution alleged at their trial that they

had murdered "solely for the pleasure and excitement afforded by killing". The playmate was acquitted, but Bell was found guilty of manslaughter because of diminished responsibility, and sentenced to detention for life. In September 1977, when she was 20, she absconded from Moor Court open prison in Staffordshire, and was free for 36 hours before being recaptured.

However, this did not prevent her release in January 1980 on "life licence", meaning a perpetual commitment to remain in contact with the supervisory authorities. Now 35, she has a new name and an eight-year-old daughter, and is in contact with the probation service several times a year.

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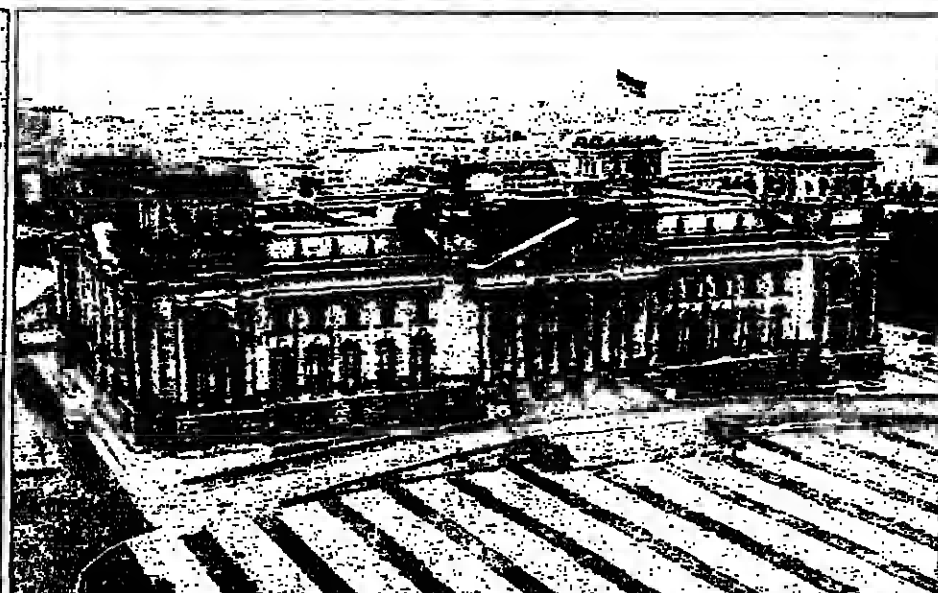
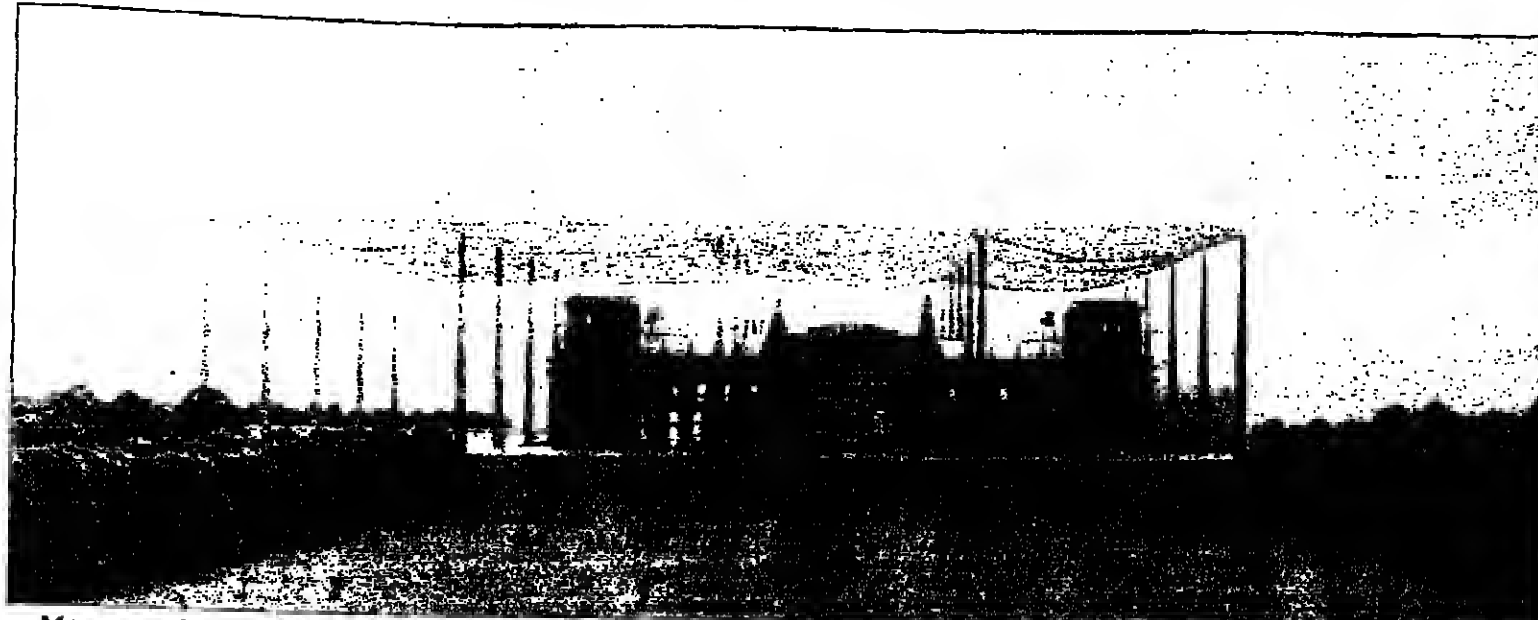
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British architect is selected to resurrect the pride of Berlin



Monumental redesign: Sir Norman Foster's model of a spacious new Reichstag, left, which will enclose the shell of the old building, right. It will incorporate car parking and conference facilities

By MARCUS BINNEY

THE British architect Sir Norman Foster has won his way on to a short-list of three being considered for the rebuilding of the Berlin Reichstag. The competition was open to all German architects, with ten others invited from abroad.

The competition jury awarded a joint first prize of DM120,000

(about £50,000) each to Sir Norman, the Spaniard Santiago Calatrava and the Dutch architect Pi de Bruijn. Three German architects shared second place. Sir Norman and the two others on the short-list will now submit more detailed designs. The final decision is expected to be taken by the Bundestag before its summer break.

Following the unification of

Germany, federal MPs voted overwhelmingly to return to Berlin and by a narrower majority to move back into the shell of the late 19th-century Reichstag, burnt by Hitler in 1933.

Sir Norman's dramatic design encloses the masonry shell of the old Reichstag in a vast and airy glass hall with 25 steel columns, each 50 metres high, supporting a roof higher than the Reichstag's

long-vanished dome. Sir Norman said: "I wanted to use simple, timeless elements of podium, column and roof. All the ancillary space demanded in the brief — car parking, offices, galleries and conference facilities — can be provided economically in the podium, while the assembly hall can be built in any configuration within the shell of the old building."

The success of a British architect

has an added resonance as the original building of 1884-94, by Paul Wallot, shows strong influence of the monumental style of Sir John Vanbrugh, with square corner towers recalling Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.

Sir Norman said: "Initially I decided not to enter the competition as the chances seemed so remote. My wife persuaded me to change my mind and we entered

the competition for the master plan as well. We wanted to create a new sense of space, a new openness, with significant public spaces inside and outside the building."

The old Reichstag is a powerful monument from the past but we did not want it to be the dominant element of the new design so it is set off-centre in the hall. His design faces the park and has one column set in a river.



Sir Norman: one of three short-listed

Country home sales to rise as 'Lloyd's effect' bites

By RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

ESTATE agents predict that a flood of properties valued at more than £250,000 will hit the market in the next few months as the recession finally breaks homeowners who have so far managed to survive mounting losses from Lloyd's or the collapse of their businesses.

Apart from a few highly publicised cases, the "Lloyd's effect", widely forecast last year, has failed to happen. Patrick Ramsay, head of country houses at Knight Frank & Rutley, said: "Homeowners who need to sell because of Lloyd's losses or a drop in their income are still hanging on. They are still waiting for a rise in prices. They are optimists, and every time there is a slight glimmer of hope in the market, they wait that bit longer. They will wait for as long as they still have a bit of equity left in their properties and the banks are giving them leeway."

But pressure from banks and mounting overdrafts mean that they will not be able to delay for ever. Mr Ramsay said: "The first soldiers have gone, forced to by their creditors. But a growing number of people are running out of time. I can't predict exactly when they will be forced to sell, but the drip of people having to sell will become a rush, maybe in three months, maybe in six."

The effect of the delay has been a growing shortage of country houses on the market, despite a good supply of buyers, particularly from abroad. Increasing numbers of agents are taking advertisements seeking properties to

sell. A local paper in Newbury, Berkshire, recently carried a spread from Strutt & Parker announcing a shortage of "quality" country properties and asking for new business.

Charles Ellingworth, from the buyers' agent Property Vision, said that many sellers had been bankrupted by Lloyd's losses. Such cases include the sale of Pitchford Hall in Shropshire last year and more recently the sale of Plush Manor, an eight-bedroom, five reception-room Georgian manor near Dorchester. It was sold by Julian and Miranda Tennant because of Lloyd's losses, and the couple were happy to publicise the fact.

The new wave of sellers is expected to trade down rather than sell up altogether. They have seen a gradual drop in incomes rather than huge capital losses as they adapt to life without a yearly cheque from Lloyd's.

"Such people haven't got the incomes to keep up the grand country houses they are living in. They are beginning to crack," Mr Ellingworth said.

"It's an insidious process, and naturally people don't want to talk about it. In the last three or four years, anyone who didn't absolutely have to sell didn't. You were just selling down the drain. Now that people think the market is turning, and their overdrafts are continuing to mount, they are beginning to discreetly enquire about putting their houses on the market."

Mr Ellingworth said that his firm was expecting a large increase in the Spring buying season.

Computer team claims memory feat

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A TEAM of Cambridge researchers is claiming a breakthrough in the race to produce desk-top computers with the power and capabilities currently available only in massive main-frame machines. The Anglo-Japanese team has developed a way of storing one bit — or unit — of information using a single electron, a sub-atomic particle.

The technology could pave the way for semiconductors able to store one tera-bit of computer memory, or a trillion units of information, on a chip one square inch in size. Such massive memories are needed for pocket or desk-top computers of the future to handle numerous different formats.

Using conventional technology, the equivalent memory could be stored only on a chip 100 yards square and would require a small power station.

Kazuo Nakazato, senior researcher at the Hitachi

Cambridge Laboratory, which has pioneered the development in collaboration with Cambridge University's Cavendish Laboratory, said yesterday: "Today's technology means that an area larger than a tennis court would be needed to hold a one T-bit memory. A single electron memory would reduce that to something the size of a 50p piece."

The breakthrough, details of which are to be published in *Electronics Letters*, is claimed to be the first to demonstrate the concept of single-electron memory.

Haroon Ahmed, professor of microelectronics at the university and the project's team leader, emphasised that there were still difficulties to overcome before commercialisation: the system works only at close to absolute zero, or minus 273C, and there are questions over how the chip will be linked into the computer.

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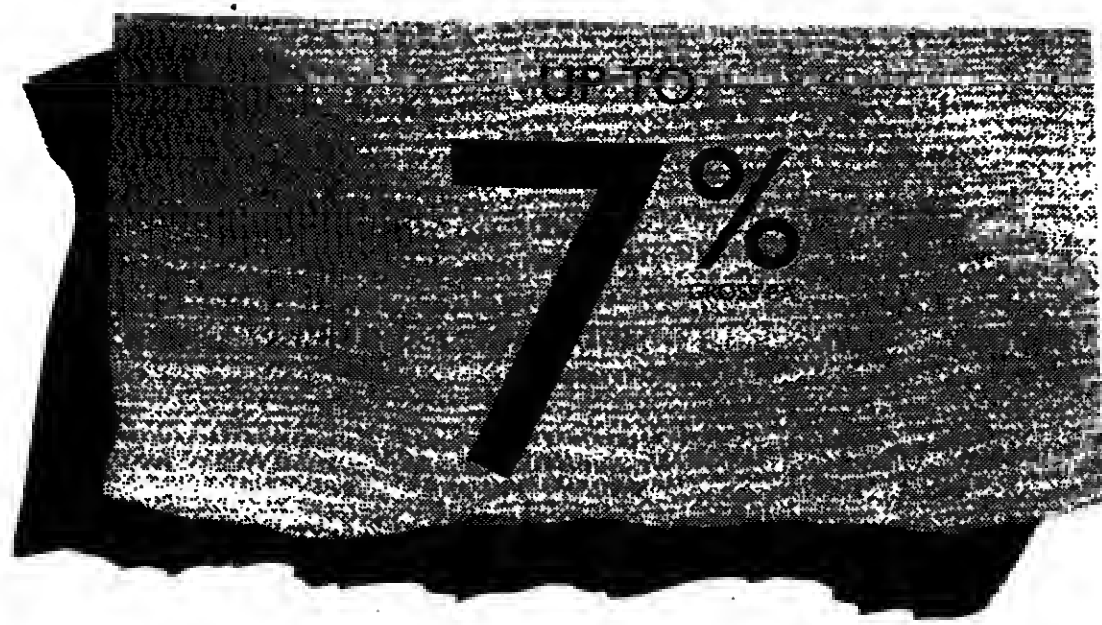
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Fisher's campaign to demolish 'corrosive' secrecy wins cross-party support

MPs give backing to 'right to know' bill

News from William Waldegrave of a white paper in the summer on greater openness in government has cheered MPs

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY
AND ROBERT MORGAN

THE campaign to shake off Britain's "corrosive disease" — official secrecy — gathered pace last night when MPs overwhelmingly backed moves to allow public access to millions of unpublished documents.

MPs of all parties ignored government appeals for caution and pressed forward with radical plans to demolish many of the barriers currently preventing the public seeing official records. The Labour MP Mark Fisher's "right to know" bill, giving access to information held by central and local government, public bodies and executive agencies, was given an unopposed second reading in the Commons.

The widespread support for the private member's bill will strengthen the hand of John Major and of William Waldegrave, the public service minister charged with creating more open government, in convincing cabinet colleagues of the need to remove current restrictions. Mr Waldegrave promised yesterday to publish the white paper on greater openness before the summer recess and, indicating his support for fundamental change, said: "We do keep too many secrets and make secrets of things that should not be secret. This makes it more difficult to keep real secrets when it is legitimate to do so."

The government will not support Mr Fisher's bill during its future Commons stages, largely because it opposes plans to repeal the 1989 Official Secrets Act. However Mr Waldegrave, who has committed himself to stripping away needless bureaucracy and secrecy, will welcome the opportunity provided by the bill to increase debate on making information more accessible to the public.

To that end, he announced yesterday that the government

would release previously unpublished papers relating to Professor R V Jones, the wartime defence scientist, and the Special Operations Executive, which ran undercover agents. He said that many other papers were being considered for release.

Mr Waldegrave added that much had been done to increase the flow of information to the public and more needed to be done. But Mr Fisher's bill was not the way to do it. He preferred the pragmatic steps that the government was taking.

Mr Fisher, a front-bench spokesman, accused the government of providing information to the public on a "grace and favour" basis, adding: "Secrecy is a corrosive disease. This bill will change the culture of decision-making and begin the end of secrecy which is an increasing British disease."

He said that the bill enshrined in law the principle that "free access to information should be a basic, fundamental right in a democracy. Britain is still one of the most secretive societies in the western world and one of the few democracies not to have some form of freedom of information legislation."

Among material which would be exempt from public access would be information on national security, defence and international relations, law enforcement, personal privacy and commercial confidentiality.

Sir John Wheeler (C, Westminster North) said that the bill created change too quickly and argued that the government's programme of "targeted reform" was a better approach.

Despite its backing last night, a backbencher's bill without government support has little hope of reaching the statute book. Although ministers will not block it, insufficient parliamentary time will be available for it.



Celebrating success: Maurice Frankel, the freedom of information campaigner, at the Commons yesterday

Decade of lobbying bears fruit at last

By MICHAEL DYNES
WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

FREEDOM of information campaigners yesterday celebrated the unexpectedly strong support from MPs for Mark Fisher's "right to know" bill, the first time such a proposal has received a second reading for a generation.

The bill will go before the Commons committee dealing with private members' bills, where each of the proposed legislation's 80 or so clauses, designed to introduce statutory "open government", will be examined.

Under the provisions of the bill, which won the backing of 166 MPs, anyone has a right to information held by Whitehall departments, local authorities, nationalised industries and executive agencies. Information could only be withheld if its release would cause "significant damage" to defence, international relations, the economy or the legitimate activities of the security services.

Yesterday's success was

long overdue for Maurice Frankel, 42, director of the Campaign for Freedom of Information, which has lobbied for more than a decade for legislation to lift the cloak of official secrecy.

He said that the spotlight would now be on William

Waldegrave, the public service minister, as he made the government's case against growing calls for a statutory right to know. "The Commons has effectively approved the principle of enforceable open government. It will take something more than a declaration that Whitehall is 'open' to satisfy the government's critics."

Despite the government's stated commitment towards increased open government, ministers still refuse to disclose information on a variety of issues, including the scientific advice they receive on the cancer risks of chemicals in food, and the environment.

The results of tests on everything from pharmaceuticals to motor cars are also kept secret.

In the summer, Mr Waldegrave will publish a white paper on open government which is expected to outline what measures ministers are prepared to support to curtail officialdom's obsession with secrecy. While ministers appear ready to listen to the open government debate prompted by Mr Fisher's bill, they will not hesitate to kill it off before it has any chance of becoming law.

Mr Waldegrave's proposals

for open government, however, are likely to be rigorously tested by right-to-know advocates, in the same way the so-called Croom directive was tested in 1977. Like the Waldegrave initiative, the Croom directive also sought, but failed, to promote open government on a voluntary basis.

Mr Waldegrave's open government initiative has been in operation for almost a year, and "the results have not been impressive", Mr Frankel said. Few governments have ever willingly given up potentially damaging information.

US urged to modify plan for Ulster peace envoy

By PETER RIDDELL
POLITICAL EDITOR

THE government is increasingly hopeful of persuading the Clinton administration to modify the president's campaign pledge to send a peace envoy to Northern Ireland. John Major will seek to defuse the issue during his talks with President Clinton in the White House next Wednesday, which will be their first meeting.

British ministers and officials have been suggesting a formula that offers a positive response to the president's initiative without provoking opposition from the Ulster Unionists and their Tory backbench allies.

Ministers have said that they would welcome a fact-finding mission by a senior American figure, but they have drawn a distinction between that and the appointment of an intermediary with a brief to negotiate, which would be unwelcome in London.

In private discussions, British officials have said that the identity of the head of any mission is crucial. Anyone associated with the Kennedy family, for example, would arouse strong Unionist criticism.

By contrast, Tom Foley, speaker of the House of Representatives, has an Irish-American background and is regarded as having a good understanding of the issues. He might be too busy to become involved, however.

A senior American official said yesterday that the administration was sensitive to the questions raised and wanted to avoid undermining the present peace talks in the province. Any mission would talk to all the constitutional parties.

An announcement is likely within the next few weeks. Albert Reynolds, the Irish prime minister, is due to visit the United States for St Patrick's day on March 17.

In the Commons, Tory MPs have said that "modelling" by President Clinton would be as offensive as British politicians going to the Mexican border or to the black areas of New York.

Selling the plan, page 12



£200 to answer a question

The cost of answering parliamentary questions has risen by about 8 per cent in the past 15 months, according to figures issued by the Treasury. It costs about £218 to answer an oral question and £94 to answer a written question, Stephen Dorrell, Treasury financial secretary, said in a written reply. Between 250 and 300 questions appear on the Commons order paper every day.

In December 1991, the costs were put at £202 for an oral question and £87 for a written one.

The Treasury has increased the upper limit for answering questions from £400 to £450. If the cost of finding out the information sought exceeds this figure, the question is not answered and the MP is told that the information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Speeding up

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, promised to speed the publication of government statistics. In a written reply he said that in future all statistics would be published as early as possible, with many being released much more quickly than at present.

Law on bail

A measure to tighten the law on the granting of bail was given an unopposed second reading in the Commons. The bill (amendment) bill, sponsored by Michael Stephen (C, Shoreham), would give prosecutors power to appeal against bail granted by magistrates contrary to the wishes of the police.

Charter costs

Publicity and public information on the Citizen's Charter during this financial year is expected to cost £700,000, the prime minister said in a written reply yesterday.



Waldegrave: a white paper in the summer

Fisher: his bill won support of 166 MPs

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Injured GP wins £1m in damages

A GP is to receive more than £1 million in damages for injuries he suffered in an accident five years ago. Dr Roger Fitzwater, 45, was crushed when a load of roof trusses fell on him at his home in Rochester, Kent.

The High Court in London heard that, despite a fractured spine, he still practised as a GP. Lawrence West, counsel for Dr Fitzwater, said that he had seriously damaged his spine in the accident.

A settlement was reached on the damages claim against Sandell Perkins Trading, of Aylesford, near Maidstone, Kent, and Kenneth Love, of Northfleet, Kent.

Rare bird shot

Police are investigating the shooting of a rare peregrine falcon, found by a school group in a stream in a suburb of Edinburgh. There are only about 30 pairs in southeast Scotland and the species is protected.

Cubs charge

Stephen Thrower, 32, a cub scout master and computer engineer of Shepperton, Surrey, was jailed for nine years at the Old Bailey for molesting nine of his young charges and making pornographic videos of them.

Smoking notice

Shopkeepers and cigarette machine operators must display warning notices from today reminding customers that it is illegal for tobacco products to be sold to anyone under 16.

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Far right gives an ancient Soviet hatred new lease of life



Peter the Great, once attacked as Antichrist

IN A courtroom in St Petersburg recently, a member of a local fascist group told liberal demonstrators: "We will exterminate those who oppose us."

He had some reason to feel confident. The court had just acquitted the group's leader, Viktor Bezverkhy, on charges of provoking racial hatred.

Among many ordinary Russians, hostility to Jews takes second place to the acute dislike felt for the peoples of the Caucasus. For the Russian new right, however, anti-Semitism still lies at the core of the entire world view. The nationality of God's elect is Russian. Antichrist is — what else — a Jew.

Antichrist has already been born. It is growing up quietly between St Petersburg and Tver, and will usher in his reign sometime around the end of this decade, according

A revived anti-Semitism is at the root of the race hatred spreading through the nationalists of post-communist Russia, writes Anatol Lieven from Moscow

to one of the bearded young visionaries who haunt public places. He has one of those frank, amiable Russian faces and, alas, he is not unusual. Strange currents of apocalyptic religion and politics always ran together in Russia, and the end of Soviet police control has brought them to the surface. They form the extreme end of the nationalism which is emerging in Russia, as it has in most of the former republics of the Soviet Union.

It is not unique for religious Russians to identify their rulers as Antichrist. When the use of tobacco was introduced

during the westernising phase of Peter the Great's rule, traditionalists denounced him as "Antichrist sitting on the throne of Russia with smoke issuing from his mouth".

With the rise of modern anti-Semitism in Russia, such apocalyptic images often became mixed up with paranoid fears of Jewish world conspiracies against Russia.

Lenin was frequently identified as a "Jewish Antichrist" in anti-communist propaganda. With the collapse of communism and the rise of Russian chauvinism this is a view that is once again gaining ground.

In a more "respectable" and "scholarly" form, it finds expression in a new biography of Lenin published last week. In the *Light of Day* by Vladimir Solokhin.

This book has had considerable success because of the relentless way it strips away the lies with which Communism had surrounded Lenin. In its turn, however, it imposes its own distorted vision: of a Lenin who was not a Russian at all, but a half-Jew brought up by his Jewish mother to hate Russia. The author goes on to claim that Lenin relied entirely on "Jews and Latvians" to carry out the revolution.

President Yeltsin is too obviously a Russian — indeed, almost a caricature — for even the wildest chauvinist to say that he is Jewish. So papers like *Russki Vestnik* (Russian Herald) make do by suggesting instead that his wife is. It therefore follows, by their reasoning, that the Jewish world conspiracy brought Mr Yeltsin to power.

For much of the traditional anti-communist right, it was a psychological necessity to portray the Bolsheviks as non-Russians. This enabled them to escape the connection between "Russian" and "Soviet" which was made by the rest of the world, and especially by those nations which fell under Soviet rule.

The extreme right wing, however, is hopelessly ambiguous about this subject, for while it hates the communists for having destroyed the monarchy and for persecuting the Russian Orthodox church, it grudgingly respects communism for having made Russia a great military power which

conquered other nations. In the words of one nationalist leader today: "We seek the restoration of the Russian empire within the borders of the Soviet Union."

Some of the most hardline Soviet loyalists in Russia are not ethnic Russians and would not find it easy to co-operate with the traditionalists. Some, indeed, are Jewish, like Yevgeni Kogan, who led the Soviet loyalist movement against the independence of Estonia.

This deep ideological split is a big factor in weakening the imperialist and anti-democratic forces in Russia. When radical nationalists in other republics use traditional national symbols, nobody can doubt their passionate sincerity, or the power of these symbols to awaken loyalty and possibly violence.



Lenin: biography says he relied on Jews

Italian corruption scandal claims two more ministers

■ Giuliano Amato has lost three ministers in the past week. The credibility of his government is now seriously damaged

FROM PHILIP WILLAN IN ROME

THE credibility of the Italian government suffered a further blow yesterday after first the finance minister and then the health minister resigned over allegations of corruption and electoral malpractice.

Giuliano Amato, the prime minister, whose position has been undermined by a wide-ranging corruption scandal which has particularly affected his own Socialist party, had just finished reassuring the senate of his determination to soldier on when Giovanni Goria, the Christian Democrat finance minister, announced his resignation.

In his letter of resignation Signor Goria said he was stepping down in order to defend himself against false accusations of corruption. He

said he had received no official notification that he was under investigation.

Signor Goria's name has been mentioned in the past in connection with the fraudulent bankruptcy of a small bank in his home town of Asti. A close political associate of the minister was arrested on Wednesday in relation to alleged corruption in the town's health service.

Francesco de Lorenzo, the health minister and a member of the tiny Liberal party, announced his resignation an hour later. On Wednesday, a parliamentary committee approved a request from Naples magistrates to lift his immunity from prosecution. They accuse him of exchanging jobs and favours for votes. Yesterday, Signor De Lorenzo's position became even more uncomfortable as Rome magistrates put his father under house arrest for alleged extortion.

Ferruccio de Lorenzo, 88, a former president of the National Doctors' Federation and a former Liberal party deputy, was charged with taking a bribe of £800,000 on the purchase of properties in Rome and Naples by a doctors' pension fund, of which he was president.

The Liberal party had threatened to pull out of the government, effectively depriving it of its parliamentary majority, if Signor Amato failed to express support for his health minister in yesterday's senate debate. The party subsequently backed down and said it would support the government anyway.

"Italy needs a government. Italy has a government, this government accepts the responsibility of governing," Signor Amato told the upper house in a debate on last week's resignation of Claudio Martelli, the justice minister. Signor Amato warned the senate of the dangers of a power vacuum and was reassured by Mino Martinazzoli, secretary of the Christian Democrat party, that he had the continuing support of his most important ally.

"Fresh elections now would be madness," Signor Martinazzoli said. "As far as we are concerned we are not defending an arbitrary survival. We will not desert."

The Christian Democrats have recently explored the possibility of widening the government coalition but received a frosty rebuff from the opposition Republicans and the Democratic Party of the Left.

The Rome daily, *La Repubblica*, reported yesterday that magistrates were investigating the gift of a one billion lire (£500,000) apartment in the Via Margutta to a former girl friend of Gianni De Michelis, foreign minister until last year and deputy Socialist party secretary until last week.

The paper named the woman as Camilla Nesbitt, 32, from Scotland, and said she was a descendant of Alexander Nesbitt, an explorer and director of the East India Company.



Dumas: will represent France at oil seed talks

France threatens to veto farm deal

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

FRANCE is threatening to veto the formal signing of a deal between the European Community and America to reduce farm subsidies when Community ministers meet next month in a move that may strain transatlantic trade relations further.

Jean-Pierre Soisson, the French farm minister, said yesterday that he had been authorised by his cabinet colleagues to block the formal passage of a EC-US agreement on oil seed production. The oil seed deal was a key element in a compromise on farm subsidies reached last November after two years of haggling that paralysed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) talks. "I shall veto it," M Soisson said.

M Soisson's threat is probably electioneering. The French Socialist government faces defeat at the polls at the end of next month and farmers' demonstrations are an almost daily occurrence. "The oil seed agreement is due to be discussed at a foreign ministers' meeting on March 8 and 9 when France will be represented by Roland Dumas, the foreign minister. Community rules say that the agreement could be settled under qualified majority voting that would not

allow France alone to block the 11 other EC states.

Italy and Belgium, however, have also hinted that they may join France in derailing the agreement. Denmark, which holds the EC presidency, is likely to take the item off the agenda if deep divisions re-open on the issue.

British officials cautioned last night that even a delay would be bad for relations with the new Clinton administration. "At a time when the Americans have talked about reopening the farm deal, the Community should confirm the oil seed agreement," one said.



Endangered species: a soldier paints the double-headed eagle of tsarist Russia on the side of a TU 95 bomber due to be scrapped under the Start 2 agreement

Checkpoint Charlie's ghost haunts Berlin

BY MICHAEL BINYON

BERLIN is a city of ghosts. The past, terrible and glorious, haunts every street and building, revealing the wounds of history. Those from the second world war are still discernible, but are fading fast; those inflicted by 40 years of communism are massive and they will take years to heal.

No street was so scarred by the city's division as Friedrichstrasse, the spinal cord of East Berlin. At its southern end was Checkpoint Charlie, the only crossing point for foreigners, where Soviet and American tanks confronted each other in 1961.

The debris of the border has now been cleared away: the wooden huts where the Stasi guards issued visas and demanded the minimum fee of DM25, the watch towers, floodlights, concrete tank traps, the huge car inspection

compound hemmed in by the Berlin Wall. A few relics of control, ugly and rusting, form part of the museum of the wall's history. Now it takes only half a shuddering minute to cross the once impenetrable frontier; the whole desolate area will soon be an American business centre.

Visible war damage includes the pocked stonework, exposed girders and gaping brickwork where upper floors have been blown away. Berlin's great cathedral near by has at last been restored, but the neighbouring colonnade of the old national gallery is still in ruins.

Already East Berliners take changes for granted, and are impatient at the long wait for the opening of the West. Whatever is built, the past will still seep through. Only in Germany is archaeology a 20th-century science.

Foster's plans, page 7

Bonn pumps in funds to help ease growing misery in east

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN SCHWERIN

BONN'S decision this week to grant the five states of former east Germany an extra DM3.6 billion (£1.5 billion) this year and DM8.5 billion next year comes as hopes fade for swift agreement on a "solidarity pact" to boost funds for the east. Unemployment continues to rise and fears of unrest grow.

The emergency funds will be added to the fund set up to finance investment in the infrastructure in the east. Economists say that unless private investment can be boosted, the east will fail to generate enough jobs to get the economy moving. A group of Germany's largest industries in the west this week promised to increase purchases from the east, but employers say that with wages in the east now standing at around 75 per cent of those in the west of the country, while unit costs of

production are almost double, large-scale investment is unattractive.

There is considerable disillusion in the east of the country, a revulsion against the west Germans, political instability in most eastern state governments and a sharp fall in the birthrate, attributed to a general sense of insecurity. Mecklenburg-West Pomerania is the poorest and sparsely populated state in the country, bordering the Baltic. The largely agricultural area has lost two of its main sources of income: the shipyards in Rostock have been hit hard as orders for vessels from the former Soviet Union have disappeared and tourism along the Baltic coast has dwindled as east Germans, who previously had nowhere else to go, head abroad on cheap package holidays.

Yet as Berndt Seite, the prime minister of the state, points out, the improvements of the past three years are extraordinary: motorways have been privatised and are now filled with goods; a private banking sector has been established; a huge repair and renovation programme has begun; telephones have come to villages where before people had to wait for 20 years; and new drains, electricity networks, waterworks and air pollution controls have been put in place.

All this, he said, is now taken for granted by local people. Few in the West understood the challenge of adapting to a new society, he added. People felt overburdened and confused. "On the one hand they want everything more quickly; on the other they say they need time to adjust."

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British editor remodels the soigné symbol of literary New York



EUSTACE Tilley, the soigné Regency gent who for 68 years has served as a symbol of *The New Yorker* magazine, has had plastic surgery (Ben Macintyre writes).

To mark its 68th anniversary, America's most literary magazine invited eight artists to recreate Tilley, who graced the first cover of *The New Yorker* on February 21, 1925 in the

guise in which he appears, above left, as created by Rea Irvin, the magazine's then art editor. The other interpretations are, from left, the work of Paul Davis, Art Spiegelman and Ronald Searle. Tilley has appeared, as a pseudonym or cartoon, in every issue. Each anniversary, Tilley has returned to the cover, but never like this. For the more old-fashioned readers

of *The New Yorker*, some of whom are already angry at the new British-born editor, Tina Brown's iconoclastic approach, the various images of Tilley in this week's issue may be seen as yet another slight to the ancient traditions of the magazine.

But Tilley himself does not seem to mind a bit, maintaining his distinguished mien in each of his new depictions, which have done little to ruffle the poise of this urbane sophisticate. The monodisc butterfly-watcher (or "hyperopic Regency lepidopterist" in the ponderous *New Yorker* speak that still crops up from time to time) was named after the aunt of someone in the advertising department.

In traditional *New Yorker* vein, in this week's issue Charles McGrath sought the inner-meaning of Tilley or, in his own words, indulged in some "iconographic speculation". Why does he look one way in the original picture and the other way inside the magazine where he is the figurehead for the "Talk of the Town" section, Mr McGrath wondered.

"Why has the butterfly been replaced by an owl?" he agonised. "What was Irvin trying to say here?" He concludes: "They had to put something in that first issue."

Clinton puts faith in selling his budget direct to the people

While Congress quibbles over the fine print of his recovery plan, the president is challenging it to come up with something better

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton's economic recovery package lost some of its early lustre yesterday as memories of his powerful address to Congress on Wednesday night gave way to detailed scrutiny of the figures.

Congressional and media scrutiny suggested that the deficit reduction would be less dramatic than first assumed. Tax increases would precede and exceed spending cuts, and some of the proposed cuts were distinctly dubious. The administration had presented the plan on Wednesday as honest, credible and devoid of the budgetary gimmicks to which previous administrations had resorted.

Mr Clinton campaigned for

the package in Ohio and New York state yesterday. Between them, his top officials carried his message directly to 28 states in a concerted effort to generate popular pressure on Congress.

"The price of doing the same thing is higher than the price of my programme," the president said, insisting that he had "no interest in raising a penny in taxes if we're not going to do the cuts".

The administration was under no illusions about the hurdles it faces. Leon Panetta, the White House budget director, said there was only a 50-50 chance of Congress approving the plan, while Lloyd Bentsen, the Treasury secretary, acknowledged that some conservative Democrats could defect. "We've never had the discipline of the Republicans," he said.

Mr Clinton has majorities of 82 and seven in the House and Senate. Those conservative Democrats, mostly southerners and past allies of Mr Clinton, could prove critical in the coming months. The growing perception that the president was more serious about tax increases than spending cuts played on their worst electoral fears.

The plan was "selling right now, but it's selling on the basis of the rhetoric," said Pete Geren, a Texas congressman who is trying with colleagues to identify additional spending cuts. "A lot of us are going to want more in spending cuts," Mike Parker, a Mississippi congressman, said. Equally ominous, Sam Nunn, the powerful chairman of the Senate armed services committee, said he feared the president was cutting too much from the Pentagon budget and was uncertain whether he could support the package.

On Wednesday, the administration had touted the plan

as a \$500 billion (£340 billion) deficit reduction package, but later admitted new programmes and tax incentives to encourage growth would in fact mean a cumulative reduction of \$325 billion by 1997.

It also emerged that it would take four years before phased-in spending cuts could reach even rough parity with tax increases. Critics also pointed out that the \$247 billion in proposed spending "cuts" included higher taxation of social security benefits, increased fees for government services and politically sacred programmes that Congress would fight to protect.

Newt Gingrich, the Republican House whip, labelled the package "vintage Herbert Hoover and Jimmy Carter". Mr Clinton and Mr Panetta responded testily to charges that they were old-style "tax-and-spend Democrats".

Mr Clinton challenged his opponents to specify cuts of their own. "No hot air. Show me where," he said in Missouri. Mr Panetta told Republican critics to "put up or shut up" and suggested they were "the perfect example of the gridlock the American people are tired of".

Ulster compromise, page 9

Bentsen: conservative Democrats may defect

Ulster compromise, page 9

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Ulster compromise, page 9

Bentsen: conservative Democrats may defect

Mubarak draws up plan for deportees

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER

EGYPT yesterday put forward a three-point plan to solve the deadlock over the 396 Palestinian deportees stranded in a Lebanese no man's land, which has halted the Middle East peace talks.

The plan was submitted to American officials during talks in Cairo. Palestinian sources said that under the suggested blueprint, the deportees would return in three stages ending in June. A spokesman for the deportees at their makeshift camp later hinted that the plan would be acceptable if Israel agreed to end the policy of deportation, which has been widely condemned internationally.

Egypt's pivotal role in the bid to revive the flagging peace process was underlined when Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, invited President Mubarak to a summit in Washington. Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, is expected to make a separate trip to the American capital soon.

"President Clinton and President Mubarak have already been working together and I am sure that this meeting in the first part of April will enable them to deepen their relationship and provide further leadership for the peace process," Mr Christopher said.

During yesterday's talks, America and Egypt agreed to work for a speedy resumption of the suspended peace process. Palestinian sources said that the compromise had earlier been discussed between Mr Mubarak and Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. It is expected that the PLO will approve it as a means of resuming the talks.

Previously, the PLO has insisted that all the deportees be taken back immediately as specified in United Nations Security Council resolution 799 as a condition for the Palestinians returning to the negotiating table. The Clinton administration is hoping that talks can resume in Washington within two weeks of Mr Mubarak's visit.

Pyramid trip sets style for Christopher

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

LESS than 24 hours into his first foreign policy mission yesterday, Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, was taking a tour of Egypt's pyramids at Giza.

Far from being a frivolous gesture, the heavily guarded trip was intended as a sign that, although the dapper Mr Christopher, 67, may be pursuing the same goals in the Middle East as his predecessor, James Baker, he will be adopting a different, more relaxed style.

Mr Baker pursued a frenetic timetable that allowed little

time for sightseeing. He favoured "banging heads together" when it came to solving Arab-Israeli differences and invested much of his reputation on the Middle East peace process he began in Madrid in 1991.

The Clinton administration, in contrast, has said that it will turn its attention to other problems, notably Bosnia, if the Arabs and Jews cannot find some way of bridging the chasm that still divides them. "It is a big world, there are lots of things to do," a senior official told reporters on Mr

Christopher's plane before it touched down on the first leg of the six-nation trip. "This seemed to us to have a very high priority, but it cannot continue to have a priority if we are pushing against a closed door."

The message was the bluntest given by an American administration since Henry Kissinger started Middle East shuttle diplomacy 20 years ago: show some signs of flexibility, or Washington will abandon its willingness to be a shuttle negotiator.

Mr Christopher told corre-

spondents that he did not intend to match Mr Baker's record for the number of countries visited. He will be practising "preventive diplomacy" designed to avert pitfalls for President Clinton rather than imposing solutions.

As well as the pyramids, he will be visiting the Syrian Golan Heights and some sites in Israel. "His intention is to demonstrate a genuine interest in these countries, not just see them as pawns in a diplomatic game," one American source said.

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Career choice you can count on

Two weeks ago, on the eve of Michael Heseltine's attack on accountants at the Scottish branch of the Institute of Directors, a large group of undergraduates gathered at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford.

Drawn from a broad mix of disciplines — modern languages, social anthropology, science and technology — they were attending presentations and interviews as part of Coopers & Lybrand's annual milk-round for next year's trainees. In short, they were setting out on that long journey which should lead to their names appearing on these pages in three or four years' time.

Had Mr Heseltine been in Oxford instead of Edinburgh that day, would he have attempted to persuade these bright young brains to eschew the subtle temptations of Coopers and make their way instead to presentations made by firms of engineers?

As it happens, many of those at the Randolph had science and engineering backgrounds. But as one chemist, already holding a job offer from Coopers, said: "None of my chemist friends have got anywhere near a job. There just don't seem to be any around this year."

Students continue to gather

Chartered accountancy attracts graduates because of its excellent prospects, Edward Fennell reports

In such large numbers at these presentations because of the persistent appeal of accountancy to the graduate class. As Ian Plaistowe, the president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, said in his swift riposte to Mr Heseltine: "It is worth asking why accountancy has been so attractive as a career to talented young graduates as opposed to, say, engineering?"

"I would argue that it is because firms of chartered accountants have been willing to spend on training to an extent which puts most of the rest of business to shame, in particular the engineering sector. Unless and until other sectors take training in business and finance as seriously as my profession, accountancy is likely to remain one of the main routes to the top in the leading companies."

So while other industries are cutting back their intake of graduates, the main accountancy firms are recruiting hundreds of graduates each year, regardless of recession. Whether or not they expect still

to be practising chartered accountants 20 years hence, those Oxford undergraduates gathered together two weeks ago perceived that a chartered accountancy qualification provides an excellent start to a career.

Ian du Pre, who heads the Coopers graduate recruitment exercise, says the firm does not take on such large numbers purely for the fun of it. The cost

of training is now so expensive that he must aim to be as cost-effective as possible in the numbers and calibre of the people he recruits.

'Firms of chartered accountants have spent a significant proportion of their revenue on training'

The goal is not simply to attract people who will be good technically (the "bean counters"), but also to look for those who have a high level of commercial and inter-personal skills. The aim then is to retain them for as long as possible, because only in that

way can a return be obtained on the training investment. Clients will pay for accountants' services, Mr du Pre says, because they have the capacity to give "added creative value". Were they to fail to do so then the clients would go elsewhere.

Again, as Mr Plaistowe remarked, accountants could not survive "unless they were providing skills and services which the market wants".

So what are these skills? What precisely will those who are successful today be able to bring to British business? Andrew Colquhoun, the secretary and chief executive of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, says that accountancy is part of the "essential invisible infrastructure of a market economy". It provides the basis for informed financial decisions by investors and management. The accountant's basic technical skills ensure the provision of the information. The added value comes in helping make the right decisions.

And that brings us back to the numbers game. The finan-

cial decision-making process is not simply a service activity, such as hand-dressing or catering. It is fundamental, at the strategic level, to the effective use of industrial and national resources. That is why, perhaps, when Coopers & Lybrand was setting its applicants a task for a group problem-solving activity, it did not pose a mathematical riddle. Instead, it asked that they should discuss and draw up a list of national priorities for expenditure and action.

The debate which ensued was all about clarity of thought, analysis of issues and the presentation of arguments within a team context. Perhaps, not surprisingly, they decided that education and training should be priority number one. Because, as one participant said, like a worthwhile qualification, education and training is one of the few investments guaranteed to give a long-term return.

Today's PE2 results should bear that out.

To celebrate the quincentenary of the publication of Luca Pacioli's landmark book in accountancy history, the ICA will hold an exhibition at its Moorgate HQ next spring.



On the attack: Michael Heseltine's comments on accountancy were provocative

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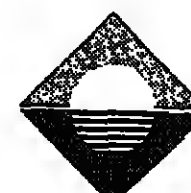
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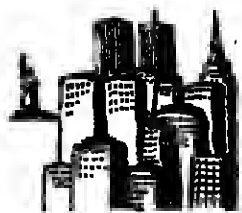
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Alexander Chancellor in New York



Girls are to be dragged off to people's workplaces for a day in order to improve their self-confidence

I admire New Yorkers for their eagerness to espouse almost any cause, but sometimes they will go a little far. The latest one was launched this week under the slogan "Take a girl to work with you for a day." The idea is that on April 28 every grown-up person with a job, whether or not he or she is a parent, should seek out a girl of between nine and 15 years of age and drag her off to work for the day. It is hoped that half a million girls will cheerfully submit to this treatment. The boys will stay behind at school and be lectured by their teachers on "issues involving women and girls". The New York Times, which is one of the sponsors of the project, reported.

What is the point of the project, though? According to the Ms Foundation for Women, whose brainwave it was, its aim is to try to preserve that self-confidence which is usually present in little girls under the age of nine, but tends to evaporate when they reach the age of puberty. The Ms Foundation recognises that keeping girls feeling chipper through their adolescent years is not a simple task, but it believes that sending them off to offices, shops, and factories for a day will help, because it "will show girls the kind of work people do, and it

American children are the cockiest in the world

will show them that adults are interested in their views and their participation". The event's organiser, Neil Merlino, explained: "This hopefully will be a day where girls feel they're okay as they are: what they think, how they look, how they smell."

The potential value of the project is, of course, supported by "studies"; but my own research, skimpy though it has been, suggests that close attention should be paid to the kind of work little girls are taken to. A woman in my office, for example, explained that she had never much enjoyed going with her father to work because he was a psychiatrist and his place of work was a state mental institution. Even at this week's publicity breakfast to launch the project, one of the sponsors, a television journalist, admitted that, having once taken her little girl to work, she had had to take her out on a story involving a dead body. Ms Merlino insists that the girls won't only be shown "the glamour jobs", but one would like to think that certain places will be excluded from the visiting list — sewers and mortuaries, for example.

Restaurants would be fun for the girls to visit, but there are difficulties about that because of safety regulations. Offices, on the other hand, are generally very boring. In my experience, children who are brought into work by people with office jobs tend to get very bored very quickly and ex-

The author writes The New Yorker's "Talk of the Town".

In the course of his speech to the Carlton Club recently, John Major talked about the principles on which he claims his government is being conducted and more than once cited the political philosopher, Edmund Burke. His speech consisted of a series of edifying generalisations such as "We believe in fostering freedom by giving people more freedom to choose for themselves." He did not once mention the Maastricht Treaty, but Mr Major knows, as well as anyone else from the polls, that the British people want a referendum on the treaty. He also knows that if the people were given that freedom to choose for themselves they would reject the treaty by a wide margin.

In reality, the spirit of Maastricht is utterly alien to the spirit of Burke. He was an ardent defender of the British constitution and in particular of the role of the House of Commons within that constitution. In *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (1791) he wrote: "The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate is the

Edmund Burke would have bitterly attacked Maastricht, writes Conor Cruise O'Brien

Liberty sacrificed on the altar of theory

peculiar duty and proper trust of a member of the House of Commons." Is the ratification of Maastricht compatible with the Burkean duty and trust of a member of the House of Commons "to preserve that liberty inviolate"? I think not.

"I feel an insuperable reluctance," said Burke, "in giving my hand to destroy an established system of government, upon a theory, however plausible it may be." That was in a speech about India in 1783. Six years later, Burke was demonstrating that same "insuperable reluctance" by his resistance to the French Revolution, even in its apparently benign and pacific constitution-making stage. Maastricht is the latest phase in a

sustained effort to destroy an established system of government — one made up of sovereign nation states associated for certain purposes — upon a theory, that of federalism.

Near the end of his life, in 1796, Burke feared that Britain was about to be swallowed up in a larger continental system based upon a theory. In protest against Pitt's decision to send an envoy to Paris to seek peace with the Directory, Burke wrote: "That day was, I fear, the fatal term of local patriotism. On that day, I fear, there was an end of that narrow scheme of relations called our country, with all its pride, its prejudice, and its partial affections. All the little quiet rivulets, that watered an

humble, a contracted, but not an unfruitful field, are to be lost in the waste expanse, and boundless, barren ocean of the homicide philanthropy of France."

I grant you that Maastricht is not homicide. That word apart, the whole spirit of this passage is profoundly anti-Maastricht. It must strike a chord in the bosom of every Eurosceptic while to the Maastricht true-believers it will sound like airy-fairy stuff, without relevance to the realities of the late 20th century.

It is true that Mr Major himself is not a Maastricht true believer. They are federalists, while he is an anti-federalist who imagines that, by his clever negotiating, he has taken the

federalist harm out of Maastricht. The European leaders don't agree. One of the most vociferous of these, Martin Bangemann, the senior German representative on the European Commission, announced last week: "There is no alternative to a federal state... A united Europe in which each state is allowed to pick and choose has no realistic chance of survival." Herr Bangemann considers Maastricht as a step on the road to federalism and he was telling doubters, like the British and the Danes, to commit themselves wholeheartedly to the federalist project or get out of the European Community. So, whatever Mr Major may imagine he is doing in seeking to ensure ratification of Maastricht, he is actually serving the federalist project and toeing the Bangemann line.

The prime minister and the leaders of the Opposition are determined to push the British people into a project that they know the people would reject if they were allowed a say in the matter. This is an unprecedented exercise for a parliamentary democracy and a most deplorable one.

The genius of watercolour

Refugees from the extremes of modern art now have a show to give them joy

Do you find piles of sacking at the Tate incomprehensible? Is your intelligence insulted by rocks, rags and tubes on show at the Hayward? Well, you can relax. At the Royal Academy in London is the antidote, a haven for refugees from garbage art, an escape from the Great Con.

I have now been three times to the Academy's Great Age of British Watercolours show and it is more packed each time. The exhibition is emerging as one of the surprise blockbusters of the year. Some 2,500 visitors a day are crammed into six galleries. New York's massive Matisse show handled just twice that number in 30. The reason is plain. These are the Old Contemptibles of British art, the watercolour lobby. They have waited long for this day and mean to make the most of it, on parade in corduroy and tweed, tartan, twill and sensible shoes. They learned their art not in the frigid sheds of art education but in the salons of the Courtauld, the attics of the National Trust, the basements of Abbott and Holder. They have fought off a lifetime's sneers from abstract expressionists. They bricked down against hails of bricks, scrap metal, pebbles and junk. They stayed true to the faith.

Now they have their show. They come to worship at the shrine of Cozens and Girtin, Cotman and Varley, Cox, Turner and Palmer. They love it. I have rarely watched faces glow with such joy in an art gallery. Not here the bored yawns, the frowning search for the artist's name, of the art mausoleums. These people know. As they float from room to room theirs is the smile of recognition, the smile of the beatified.

Their high priest is Andrew Wilson, organiser of the exhibition (sponsored by Martin). Mr Wilson is plainly an anarchist. He has tossed oom his walls whatever pictures came to hand from 1750 to 1880. There is little by way of a theme and scant regard for balanced representation. Frankly it is a mess. But who cares? From the monochrome landscapes of Cozens, Gillpin and Girtin through the sumptuous gouaches of Samuel Palmer to Turner's great exhibition pieces there is not a dull moment. Was this not the most glorious age of British art? Even Constable, Gainsborough and Turner, all here, seem more intense, more revolutionary in watercolour.



Michael 'Angelo' Rookers's study of the Gatehouse at Battle Abbey, Sussex, one painting from an exhibition of great riches

Simon Jenkins

Water is indeed the essence. I suppose it is the veil through which the British customarily see their landscape. Water seeps, drips, soaks, cascades down the walls of the Academy. Turner's *Reichenbach Falls* had me reaching for an umbrella. The washes of Cox and Bonington look as if they have been dipped in a stream and left to dry. Whistler's seascapes appear drenched with tears, as probably they were. When Danby or de Wint struggled to bring sunlight onto a wall or hillside, the foreground steams in protest and rainbows burst from heavy clouds. As for Varley, I am sure that he was painting under water.

Turner justly towers over the gathering. But John Sell Cotman is his revelation. He emerges from the shadows of his black castles and lowering slopes to challenge the master of the medium. It is a huge challenge. Turner's rain-soaked Stamford high street is among his masterpieces. His Venetian lagoons, with sun, air and water stirred into pools of gorgeous colour outstrip anything he did in oil.

But Cotman has an answer every time. He took over the mantle of Girtin and could have passed it straight to the Impressionists had he not wandered off into etching. His

Palmer's idylls of the gloaming are upon us, his brilliant *Harvesters by Firelight* released from the Mellon collection in Washington. Water is now mixed with gum and bodycolour to produce effects as vivid as any oilpaint. John Martin's sunsets, beloved of Queen Victoria, fairly leap off the wall.

The Victorian watercolourists eventually moved on to gigantism. The exhibition ends with a room of huge pieces in gilt frames, artists seeking to produce effects as vivid as any oilpaint. John Martin's sunsets, beloved of Queen Victoria, fairly leap off the wall.

I happened to go from the Academy straight across the river to the Hayward Gallery, to an exhibition that purports to show the cream of European sculpture between 1965 and 1975. It was a shock. The show is an assembly of tubing, light bulbs, sacks, old newspapers, a parrot, cactus, brushwood and foam rubber, explained in the language now *de rigueur* for such work: "totality and matter of factness in relation to the viewer... the playfulness asks

fundamental questions that are philosophical as well as physical."

Those who complain of such nonsense are charged with repeating Ruskin's attack on Whistler's modernism as "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face". Dare we risk the ridicule later heaped on Ruskin's head? Both Ruskin and Whistler are on show at the Academy. Ruskin would surely be more respectful if only he knew. Dare we say within the hallowed walls of a great gallery that we think we are being conned?

I believe the alert imagination does not capitulate merely because a gallery asks to be "taken seriously". The imagination does not behave like Gombrik's art critic, so drunk that he cannot tell a friend from a lamp-post, and so embraces both. It asks where Ruskin may have been at fault, but reserves the right to repeat his accusation. In my view the Hayward's emperors are totally naked. But there are garments aplenty at the Academy. The Old Contemptibles know what they like. But they know more than that. They know that what they like is good.

The Great Age of British Watercolours 1750-1880 is at the Royal Academy of Arts in Piccadilly until April 12.

Fun in Brum

JOHN MAJOR and John Smith are planning to hang up their buckets and spades, and turn their backs on the traditional seaside party conference. Luring them away, apparently, is the enticing prospect of a week in Birmingham.

Both parties, it seems, are contemplating holding a future annual gathering at the city's International Conference Centre, which was host to the EC circus last October.

But the prospect of thousands of Labour comrades and equal numbers of knights of the shires descending on Birmingham for two weeks has not exactly united the city — which would be considerably disrupted by the necessary security.

The former Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Rev Hugh Montefiore, supports the idea. "People think of Birmingham as an ugly manufacturing city. But people are wrong. It is the city that nobody wants to go to but no one wants to leave. I think the conference-goers will be in for a pleasant surprise."

Sir Richard Knowles, the leader of the Labour-controlled city council, is especially delighted at the prospect of the Tories coming to town. "I can think of no finer place for them to come to spend their overdrafts. It would be a great opportunity for some of my comrades from Sparkbrook to grab the Tories by their lapels and ask them about the £55 million they pinched from our grant money this year. But we're not fussy. We would have the Militant Tendency if they could afford to pay for it."

Shrine haunter

FROM serial killers to saints. Brian Masters, who worked eight hours a day for 10 weeks to finish his latest work, *The Shrine of Jeffrey Dahmer*, is moving to a higher plane. He is planning a book about six saints.

Masters has written more than 20 books, on subjects from Voltaire to dukes and duchesses, but concedes he is best known for his work on mass murderers. His *Dahmer*

book follows *Killing for Company*, the gruesome story of Dennis Nilsen. But he is reluctant to be typecast.

"There will be no more books about serial killers from me. I have thought about writing about saints for a while," he said at the launch of the *Dahmer* book at Hodder & Stoughton in Bedford Square on Thursday night. "Saint-hood is just as interesting as wickedness," says Masters.

"I will do Francis of Assisi and St Anthony of Padua, the patron saint of lost causes. When ever I go there I always put my hand on the tomb." He also proposes to do Lord Longford, "a living saint" who is also known for his keen interest in murderers.

Masters is now hoping to secure a publishing deal for the *Dahmer* book in the States. He was commissioned to write it by Harold Evans, president of Random House, after writing a 10,000-word article in *Vanity Fair*, which is edited by Evans's wife Tina Brown. But Random House was not happy. "They wanted me to be more judgmental. In short to say that *Dahmer* was a monster. I am not prepared to do that."



DIARY

For some at the General Synod this week, the ordination of women has been spurred along the road to Rome. Others, however, have simply been spurred round the corner to Wippell, the clerical tailor in Westminster, which is now exhibiting a fetching new line of pastel shirts (pink or mint-green) for its new prospective customers.

Who's where

IT WAS not so much a case of who was at the launch of Lord Blake's biography of Winston Churchill, as who was not. Conspicuously absent from the Reform Club was John Charmley, author of the revisionist tome, *Churchill: The end of the Glory*.

It would have been Daniel in the lion's den. Charmley's unconventional view of Churchill provoked outrage among loyalists such as Baroness Thatcher who was at the reception and would, no doubt, have wasted no time in putting the record straight. In *Churchill*, Blake and his co-author William Louis, have stuck to a traditional perspective of the heroic war leader.

But it wasn't only Charmley who was absent. That man Alan Clark is definitely not invited," spluttered Louis. Of course Clark, military historian and former Tory MP, was Charmley's most vocal supporter. Blake was more diplomatic about Charmley. "He is a bit of a boaster," he said. A spokeswoman for publishers CUP, happy to have averted another epic Churchillian battle, says: "We thought it more diplomatic not to invite them."

To mark the 40th anniversary of the Queen's coronation in April, the Guards Museum on Birdcage Walk has collected 4,000 toy soldiers to recreate the coronation procession that travelled the roundabout 5½-mile route from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace. Sixteen thousand other lead soldiers will also be on show, some of them recreating Trooping the Colour and the birthday parade. Just be careful where you put your feet.

Safer comedy

STEPHEN FRY, author and comedian, returns to his Cambridge alma mater tomorrow,

Brought to wheel

Will it or won't it snow in time for the 65 or so mushers gathered in Naim this weekend for the fifth round of the British husky rally championship. Unseasonably, element weather means that the first four rounds have been contested using wheel-mounted rigs. "We've been praying for snow," says organiser Gillian Bundy, "although it has to be the right kind. If there's too much the dogs founder around and we can't move from place to place, except in a van. The dogs are not allowed to pull on public roads." Sounds just like British Rail.

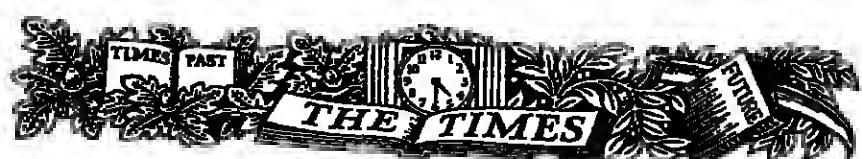
As guest of honour at the explicitly titled undergraduate extravaganza, Sexpo '93.

The event, organised by the student union, is part of an AIDS Awareness campaign. "Stephen's going to give a short monologue," says organiser, Rachel Boyd, "and then there'll be a variety of sketches, monologues and revues on sexual relationships."



Wanted: right kind of snow

As for the inevitable medical message, that will be communicated through audience participation. Half of the audience at the Corn Exchange will find a banana under their seat, and the other half will find a condom. At a specified moment, the audience will be shown how the two are brought together. And for this they go to university?



THE WORTH OF JOBS

Britain's economic performance depends on its people

It is tempting for politicians to be cynical about unemployment. The Conservatives won elections in 1983, 1987 and 1991 with close to three million people out of work. Even now that the headline total has surpassed three million, ministers are still confident that the figure will be falling again by the time of the next election; and it is the direction of the trend rather than the total that seems to affect people's votes.

This cynicism is misplaced and wrong. Unemployment ruins people's lives and brings needless waste to the economy. It demands serious thought from right and left. This week, for the first time in over a decade, the left has been singing some of the better tunes. In a wide-ranging speech on the economy, the shadow chancellor Gordon Brown moved beyond the traditional argument of public versus private sector and market versus state to look at the changing relationship of labour and capital.

Following arguments taken from the think-tanks of President Clinton, he argued that, at the start of the industrial revolution, capital was the scarce resource and labour was seen simply as a commodity, with one worker virtually interchangeable with another. Now that money moves internationally at the touch of a computer button, he said, it is capital that has become a global commodity. Thus what marks out one economy from another today is the quantity and quality of its relatively immobile skilled labour and management.

The implications of this change could be radical. Investment is still vital for economic growth, but investment in people — their education and training — will become the crucial determinant of competitiveness. British skill levels, according to the Confederation of British Industry, lag 40 per cent behind the world's best. This country has proportionately fewer youngsters in further and higher education than both South Korea and Taiwan.

Yet the tax system, the benefit system, incentives and grants are all loaded against training and education. Those on benefit are not allowed to spend more than 21 hours a week educating themselves or learning a new skill. Investment incentives and regional grants aim to encourage investment in buildings, plant and equipment, not in people. Companies spend far too little on training, preferring to poach skilled workers from competitors. The result is that when the recovery arrives, it may be strangled by skill shortages, just as it was in the 1980s. Inflation will then rise, and so will imports.

Now is the perfect time to ensure that these bottlenecks do not occur. Those out of work must be encouraged, possibly even compelled, to use their time productively in educating themselves. They may learn specific skills, but they would be better off simply learning how to learn, so that they can adapt to the demands thrown up by a growing economy. Yesterday's finding that 40 per cent of school-leavers going into further education cannot read properly or do simple sums suggests that many of the young unemployed could profitably improve their literacy and numeracy.

Private training is still preferable to public, since it is employers who know best what skills they need. But if tax incentives to companies do not generate the required level of training, a deterrent in the form of a levy to companies who prefer to poach than train should be considered. Meanwhile, young people cannot expect to be paid the going rate to learn a new skill. If they work for a pittance, they should not see this as exploitation or slave labour. They should regard it as an investment in their future, just as if they were at college or university. The skills they are picking up now will enable them to earn more later.

None of these concepts should be abhorrent to a Conservative government. Yet it is Labour that is better articulating them now.

RESCUED FROM EXTINCTION

The time for animal cabaret at the zoo has gone

The relaunch of London Zoo this week should be welcomed by conservationists and taxpayers alike. This apparently obsolete Victorian institution, which has cost the Treasury £30 million since 1980, now plans to seek private funding and concentrate its efforts on conservation, rather than showmanship. 'Slothful' management has given way to sharp vision.

The public attitude to zoos is complex. Donations pour in to those that try for help. Yet attendance has declined dramatically — in London's case, from three million visitors a year in the 1950s, to less than a million. To vote in such different ways with the chequebook and the feet suggests a popular nervousness about the proper role of zoos.

In its royal charter, the Zoological Society of London is committed to "the advancement of Zoology and Animal Physiology" in the study of its Regent's Park collection of animals: the learned findings are recorded in the *Journal of Zoology and International Zoo Yearbook*. But the same magisterial document also calls for "the introduction of new and curious subjects of the Animal Kingdom". London Zoo is as much a showcase for living attractions as it is a serious research institute.

The human desire to peer through the dark glass of Nature at the animal kingdom is ancient, visible in cave paintings, King Solomon's private menagerie and the Chinese emperors' marble deer house built in 1150 BC. The great zoos founded in Vienna, Madrid, Paris and London between 1752 and 1828 democratised a previously aristocratic pleasure, which has since degenerated into banal anthropomorphism. The chimpanzees' tea party and dromedary ride

may be no more; but politicians still queue up to shake the hand of visiting Chinese officials consigning another panda to a miserable life in a glass-fronted box.

A modern zoo must be more than a bio-Disneyland. Television has brought the reality of wildlife in all its savage beauty into every home and made the artificial of the zoological theme park redundant. Its prying cameras have been the main contributor to a new, and as yet unfocused, global consciousness of man changing relations with the natural world.

The world is far less sanguine about the confinement of animals than it was when London Zoo was founded in 1828. The pre-Enlightenment belief that man has careless dominion over the beasts dies hard, but the writings of Bentham and Schopenhauer against animal exploitation are gaining intellectual currency. Contemporary philosophers such as Tom Regan and Peter Singer offer a new vision of "animal rights" too puritanical to be enacted. But the appearance of Bentham's slogans against animal suffering in shop windows is not simply faddish.

Zoos will have an essential role to play in the emergence of this new intellectual paradigm, directing their energies towards the conservation of endangered species and away from animal cabaret. Polar bears do not belong in cities, as Glasgow Zoo has already acknowledged. But it is right that zoos should breed in captivity those thousands of species now facing extinction.

Zookeepers must become the ecological auditors of the next century, educating the public along the way. By its imaginative response to this challenge, London Zoo has ensured that it is not yet a dodo.

EARLY AID SAVES LIVES

The lessons of Somalia should now be applied to Somaliland

The United States plugged its finger firmly in the dyke when it initiated Operation Restore Hope to secure food deliveries in Somalia. Soon, however, that finger will be withdrawn. The United Nations, which enjoys little authority in Somalia, will take over and the old chaotic tribal and political rivalries are likely again to dictate the future of this impoverished country.

There have been noticeable improvements in the quality of life since the US troops moved in. But even American officials admit that they are a long way from restoring central authority. Without political reconciliation, all the recent humanitarian gains will be lost in a matter of months.

There is not much that the West can do about this: the rebuilding of society is a matter largely for the Somalis themselves. The best that can be hoped for is a brokered settlement that keeps the warring gangs in check. The lesson that needs to be learnt is of how slowly the West reacted to the Somali crisis. Aid agencies were warning in early 1991 that there should be swift action to save a wrecked country. Nothing happened. By the end of 1991, war was raging and anything resembling civil society had collapsed.

The same mistakes should not be repeated in northwestern Somalia, known as Somaliland. The region declared itself independent soon after the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre two years ago. In contrast to the south, Somaliland has built up a durable local administration. It has a coherent

central government that is trying to provide services and security. There is no vicious, naked warfare. In short it is still a few steps away from the chaos of the south.

Yet the government has not been recognised by the world community. The United Nations, which traditionally feels more comfortable dealing with internationally recognised authorities, has been providing only a low level of aid to local communities in the north. Somaliland ministers recently appealed to one charity for bailiwick pens; most departments had no writing implements.

There is a strong case for helping Somaliland quickly. Refugees who fled to Ethiopia will soon be returning as the camps there are closed down. As refugees they received reasonable health care and food. But in their old homes they will find no electricity, inadequate water supplies and buildings still ruined by the civil war. That will put a heavy strain on the Somaliland government.

The West can prevent the collapse of authority there by acting now. Britain is naturally wary of involvement since it could risk criticism from other African states of behaving like a neocolonial power seeking to split Somalia to Western advantage. But the merits or demerits of the Somaliland secession are not the issue. The priority must be to prevent the spread of chaos from the south of Somalia to the north. A limited amount of intelligently targeted aid now could head off a disaster later in the year.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Process of 'folding-in' Britain to the EC social chapter

From Sir Teddy Taylor, MP for Southend East (Conservative)

Sir, Your readers will have been heartened by the assurance from Mr Ray Whitney, MP, and six of his colleagues (letter, February 18) that in the event of the notorious amendment 27 being approved by the Commons, it would not mean that the social chapter of Maastricht was foisted on the United Kingdom.

However, their anger should not be directed against *The Times* (leading article, February 17) for maintaining this position, but against a number of government ministers who have been promoting the opinion on TV and elsewhere that the so-called Tory Euro-sceptics would impose the allegedly costly and socialist scheme on their own country.

I am sure that your readers will also welcome the assurance that our constitution is safe because ministers would delete the protocol from our law if Parliament so decides.

However, this apparently important assurance will be rather undermined if, as appears to be the case, the government will nevertheless ratify the Maastricht treaty with the protocol included in the text.

This is not a minor technical issue, because one of the points in the protocol is that UK taxpayers are obliged to pay their share of the administrative costs of the social chapter to which we are not a party.

It would be interesting to know if we will still have to pay this bill if the protocol is not part of UK law but is nevertheless Community law.

Yours faithfully,
TEDDY TAYLOR,
House of Commons,
February 18.

From Mr V. M. Robson

Sir, Is there not a danger that *The Times* itself is becoming obsessive in its antipathy to the Maastricht treaty (leading article, February 17)? After all, it is the policy of all three major political parties, confirmed at a general election less than a year ago, to ratify the treaty, albeit with some qualifications in the case of the Opposition parties.

It is indeed unusual for the majority of politicians of all political shades to adhere broadly to a common line on such a major issue.

Yours faithfully,
V. M. ROBSON,
Westerleigh, Coates,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire,
February 17.

From Mr George Robertson, MP for Hamilton (Labour)

Sir, Mr Ray Whitney and other Tory MPs had a bit of a cheek in accusing you of "missing the point" on the Maastricht social chapter.

It is Mr Whitney and his government who spectacularly and deliberately miss the point about amendment 27 to the bill, which gives effect to the Maastricht treaty. They know that because of the tight and constricting nature of the bill the only way in which the House of Commons can express its disagreement with the social chapter opt-out is to seek to delete the protocol on social policy from the bill.

If the amendment were carried it would then be simple for the government to go to our EC partners and negotiate the folding-in of Britain to the social chapter. The fact that there will shortly be a brief intergovernmental

conference to amend the EC treaties in line with the Edinburgh summit conclusions amply illustrates how uncomplicated the process would be.

The legalities of this issue are now shrouded in the fog of contradictory and questionable opinions, but the political realities are perfectly clear. If the House of Commons votes for amendment 27 it will be a direct, unavoidable verdict on the opt-out.

Should the government then use fine legal technicalities to attempt to wriggle away from the will of Parliament they will earn contempt at home and derision abroad. In addition, by using the royal prerogative to ignore the vote they will seriously undermine the very basis of parliamentary democracy.

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE ROBERTSON,
Principal Opposition spokesman on Europe,
House of Commons,
February 18.

From Mr Michael Spicer, MP for South Worcestershire (Conservative)

Sir, Ray Whitney and others say: "The European Community is our main market. We can only trade in Europe according to the rules set in Europe".

The UK buys £10 billion worth of goods a year from the countries of the EEC than she sells to them. We have to make up the difference by selling elsewhere in the world. That is why this country needs to remain part of a system of open world trade to which a fortress Europe attitude is the antithesis.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL SPICER,
House of Commons,
February 18.

Doubts about rice for heart health

From Dr Alexander Macnair

Sir, I disagree with Aileen Balantyne's recommendation of a Chinese diet for Mr Christopher Patten (Body and Mind, February 9). Despite the beautiful simplicity of that thought, it is not cholesterol in the diet which finishes up clogging up the arteries, nor is it the fat.

There are a dozen studies, many going back 20 years, that have attempted to show a relationship in a Western population between the cholesterol or the saturated fatty acids, or the sugar or the salt or whatever else in the diet was fashionable at the time, with blood cholesterol or diabetes or blood pressure or some other risk factor for coronary heart disease. None showed a meaningful association, and most showed no connection whatever between diet and heart disease.

Walter Kempner, from Duke University, North Carolina, published a paper on treating hyperlipidemic vascular disease with a rice and fruit diet in 1948. Although it provided only five grams of fat, no salt and no cholesterol, it still did not lower everybody's cholesterol.

Out of 83 patients in one trial who had normal cholesterol at the start, 22 showed a rise on this diet and in four it became seriously high. When the Medical Research Council in this country tried to confirm Kempner's results they could not persuade anybody to live on rice and fruit.

Even if you can persuade the average person to stick to a low-fat diet it does nothing, in my view, for their risk of having a heart attack. Most people get fat from being inactive; the way to keep the cholesterol and the blood pressure down is to avoid gaining weight by a little regular vigorous activity. Mr Patten's problem is the lingo and the yacht, not the diet.

Yours faithfully,
ALEXANDER MACNAIR,
20 Wimpole Street, W1,
February 10.

Student drop-outs

From Mr J. Anstead

Sir, The Audit Commission may well be correct in saying that £330 million is being wasted each year by students in further and higher education who drop out of courses or fail to pass their exams (report, February 11; letters, February 13, 18). However, it is wrong to blame poor advice and/or inadequate monitoring of progress.

In my view as a teacher, financial incentives encourage educational institutions to get as many bodies as possible onto their lists. This leads automatically to higher staff salaries and more money to spend on running the organisation.

Central government should define realistic minimum entry qualifications for every course and pay educational institutions only for qualifying students (though non-qualifiers might pay their own way). The result would be competition to provide the best product.

Yours faithfully,
J. ANSTEAD,
4 Brackenwood, Orton Wistow,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire,
February 18.

Sauce for ganders

From Mr Anthony D. R. Holland

Sir, In your leading article (February 16) on the last Guinness trial you advocate that such cases would be best dealt with by the appropriate bodies, such as the Securities and Investment Board, empowered with the best deterrents of heavy fines, destruction of reputation, and being excluded from business.

I fully agree and wonder whether the Press Complaints Commission or some similar body should not be granted the same powers in respect of all editors.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY HOLLAND,
Windsor Manor,
Windsor, Surrey.

Fair game?

From Mr Richard B. L. Fitzwilliams

Sir, The government has made a curious error in backing Manchester to stage the Olympic Games in the year 2000. According to your report (Sport, February 18) this will involve a cost of £2.5 billion, underwritten by the taxpayer.

Why on earth, with so many more appealing alternatives to consider, should this preposterous idea attract any support abroad?

I remember in the 1960s, in Samuel Bronston's colourful epic *55 Days at Peking*, Ava Gardner comforts a wounded young soldier in hospital. Her advice, along the lines of "Go to sleep, soldier, and dream of Manchester", was followed by his instant demise and reportedly by enormous merriment from audiences wise enough to recognise a killing joke.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD B. L. FITZWILLIAMS,
84 North End Road, NW11,
February 18.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Buccaneering spirit

From Mr Frank Grenfell

Sir, Mr Noel Falconer's memories (letter, February 15) of pirate-hunting in the South China Sea in the 1960s brought to mind my own grandfather's account of a similar venture just a century earlier, when he was a young lieutenant. He wrote later in a memoir:

On arrival at Hong Kong I was appointed to the temporary command of one of the old 40 horse power gun boats, and sent away to join another such craft searching for pirates on the coast of the mainland south of Hong Kong. On reporting myself to my chief I asked for information as to how pirates were to be found and recognised.

"Well," said he, "I don't know a pirate from a trader. They are all one or the other as it suits them at the moment. So I steam along the coast until I see a junk or two at anchor, or hauled up on shore. I then let fly a shell over their heads. If the Chinaman stands fast, I consider them good and true. If they run it shows them to have a conscience and I hold them to be pirates, and burn their junks."

My grandfather added that he wondered what the reaction of an English fishing fleet would have been.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK GRENFELL,
1 Broadbent House, Willowbrook,
Eton, Windsor, Berkshire,
February 16.

From Captain F. Harrison, RN (ret)

Sir, To go back a little further than Mr Falconer in the history of piracy in the South China Sea, the Commodore, Hong Kong, before the second world war had an anti-piracy officer on his staff.

Coastal shipping and river steamers made routine signals every four hours. If they did not "come up", the Hong Kong duty destroyer (or other handy ship or river gun boat) was despatched to investigate.

There were some successful rescues, and perhaps more false alarms, but it was an effective deterrent.

Yours faithfully,
F. V. HARRISON,
26 Kennington Palace Court,
Sancroft Street, SE11,
February 15.

Wasteful puzzling

From Mr Brian Trueman

Sir, I am happy to add my support to Mr Wagstaff's view of your increasingly difficult crossword (letter, February 15), despite having completed the last two puzzles in only the time it takes to roast a leg of lamb.

Since it is out of the question that they are getting easier, this can only be because I am even dumber than I had thought and I now see that only an innate modesty prevents me solving them all.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN TRUEMAN,
172 Bramhall Lane South,
Bramhall, Cheshire,
February 18.

From Mrs Jan Snook

Sir, I too have noticed a difference in the crosswords: can it be the setters are getting younger? After years of struggling with the slang of my parents' generation (words like *Snafu*), suddenly the solutions are as topical as... well, Mersey beat.

Yours faithfully,
JAN SNOOK,
Mayfield, Lincroft Wood Close,
Bramley, Guildford, Surrey,
February 15.

Legal-aid cuts

From the Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department

Sir, I must correct Mr Roger Goodier's suggestion (letter, February 17) that personal injury claims pursued on legal aid somehow result in a profit for the government.

Many such cases do succeed, but in legal-aid terms the best result that can be achieved in any single case is that costs are fully recovered. So the best result is neutral to the public purse. Cases which are lost, or where costs are not recovered for some reason, always result in a loss for the legal-aid fund.

Mr Goodier mentions court fees. There is no element of profit in court fees. In fact, they do not fully cover court costs. Insofar as fewer cases may be brought, the loss of court fees will be offset by lower administrative costs.

The Department of Social Security's compensation recovery unit recovers from compensation awards some of any state benefits paid out in the

meantime. But people who are receiving the sort of state benefits liable to be recovered will in most cases qualify for legal aid after the changes have been made, as they do now. If they do not, it will be because their total incomes are too high for them to qualify.

Mr Goodier says that "vast numbers of people" will be denied the right to pursue personal injuries claims. That is nonsense. The proposals will make some people at the upper end of the present qualifying limits no longer eligible. Others will have to pay more (though they will of course get the contributions refunded if they are successful and costs are recovered). But 48 per cent of households will continue to be covered by civil legal aid; 21 per cent will be able to get legal aid without paying a contribution; 27 per cent will have to pay a contribution.

Yours etc,
JOHN TAYLOR,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Lord Chancellor's Department,
Trevelyan House,
30 Great Peter Street, SW1.

Museum charges

From Professor Emeritus D. T. Donovan

Sir, The directors of four of the major museums making entrance charges believe that the advantages of charging significantly outweigh the disadvantages (Arts, February 16). They would, wouldn't they? They get more money and fewer people to manage.

How about the increasing number who cannot pay? Our millions of unemployed are unlikely to be able to afford the charges. This is just another example of the socially-divisive policies which we have had from the Conservative government.

There is a temptation for the charging institutions to spend their ill-gotten gains on gimmicks. At the British Museum, the National Gal-

lery and the National Museums of Scotland, for example, which do not charge, one can still see exhibitions which are representative of their collections. Not so at the Natural History Museum, where the cleverness of display techniques overshadows the interest of the material objects.

The museums that charge are just encouraging the government to reduce their grants. This will make it more difficult to restore fair funding if and when common sense again prevails and all our "public" museums and galleries are once more free to all.

Yours faithfully,
DESMOND DONOVAN,
(Honorary Curator, Wells Museum,
1982-5),
52 Willow Road, NW3,
February 17.

Child slavery in India

From Mr Nicholas Colloff

Sir, Your report, "Child slave marchers reach Delhi" (February 16), accurately highlights one of the principal problems threatening the enforcement of child-labour legislation, namely corruption amongst police, government officials and social workers. As serious, however, is the fact that many children and their families rely on this pitifully low-paid work for their livelihood.

Tackling slave labour requires economic as well as legal measures aimed at providing alternative employment for those entrapped by bonded labour. Boycotts of child-

produced goods without such measures might bring human rights to children whilst depriving them of a means of basic survival.

The Opportunity Trust, which creates income opportunities for the poor, has implemented programmes for street children in Bangalore and Nagpur. These focus on education and develop small enterprises to help young people and their families secure a livelihood. Without such help street children may be reduced to destitution by some of the very measures designed to help them.

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS COLLOFF,
(Director), Opportunity Trust,
103 High Street, Oxford,
February 17.

Timber supply

From the Duke of Somerset

Sir, Timber imports have long since ceased to exercise the minds of bankers and economists. Current thinking is that other, third-world, countries can grow it cheaper whilst we can make a better return on our investment by selling our expertise in such areas as banking and financial services to these same countries.

This has encouraged us to overlook the working viability of our countryside and bemoan the state of the world's rain forests whilst we enjoy a high standard of living and produce few of our own basic needs.

Perhaps this is a sustainable way of life, so long as there are others who can shoulder the burden abroad. But surely it is not the way to encourage our children to reconcile conservation and development for the 21st century;

it is a self-indulgence we cannot afford to perpetuate.

Of the total world timber trade we import some 14 per cent. With a rising world population, increasing living standards in the third world which in turn will lead to greater consumption in the countries of origin and a decline in fossil fuels, there will be still further pressure on the timber supply.

Most of the timber that we use is softwood, which we can grow in this country as well as any nation in the northern hemisphere and better than most. (We can also grow hardwoods but these are a much more costly and risky undertaking.) No other form of production offers such environmental benefits.

Yours truly,
SOMERSET
(Trustee, The Forestry Trust),
7 Bradley House, Maiden Bradley,
Wiltshire.

OBITUARIES

MAURICE BOURGÈS-MAUNOURY

Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, wartime resistance leader and former prime minister of France, died in Paris on February 10 aged 78. He was born in Lissanc, Eure-et-Loire, on August 19, 1914.

IN FRENCH postwar politics, Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury found himself fundamentally at odds with General de Gaulle, who had personally decorated him as he lay wounded in hospital in 1944. And in the end, his addition to the dream of *Algérie française* was to prove fatal to his prospects when de Gaulle took up the reins of French government for the second time, in 1958, and set out to rid France of that haemorrhaging commitment.

When he became French prime minister in June 1957 Bourgès-Maunoury had, ostensibly, many qualities to fit him for ending the long years of drift under the Fourth Republic. Through his mother he bore a famous military name. He was a much-decorated hero of wartime Resistance. He had held ministerial office in 12 French administrations. At 42 he was the youngest of France's postwar prime ministers. Enthusiasm for his appointment was considerable, even from a foreign press jaded by the charade of ever changing French governments.

That charade and the inbuilt weaknesses of France's postwar political system were in less than four months to put paid to the new prime minister as they had to his predecessors. As de Gaulle was later to recall of the 17 postwar incumbents of the Hôtel de Matignon: "How often, watching them from a distance, struggling with the impossible, had I grieved over this waste! Whatever any of them tried to do, the country and the outside world witnessed the shameful spectacle of 'governments' formed on the basis of compromise, attacked from all sides as soon as they were formed, split asunder by internal discord and dissent, overthrown before long by a vote which more often than not reflected only the impatient appetite of candidates for portfolios."

By September 1957, Bourgès-Maunoury, too, was gone, and the Fourth Republic entered the final phase of its death throes. Maurice Jean-Marie Bourgès was the son of Georges Bourgès and his wife Geneviève Maunoury, whose name Maurice subsequently added to that of his father. In this he associated himself with his maternal grandfather, General Maunoury, who, as commander of the French Sixth Army at the Marne in 1914, had delivered the vital counter-stroke which disrupted the German advance and saved France (and, as early as September, convinced von Moltke that the Germans had lost the war).

Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury was educated at the École polytechnique and in 1935 was commissioned into the artillery. As his grandfather had done, he was to fight the Germans in due course, but with very different results. He was captured in the defeat of the French Army in June 1940 and spent a year as a prisoner of war in Germany.

But he was released in 1941 and allowed to return to France. There he joined a resistance group which had close links with British Intelligence, and in due course was taken to England via Spain. He was trained by the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and was subsequently parachuted back into France. There, under the codename "Polygone", he became the famed *député militaire régional* of the south-eastern region of France. Through sabotage and other forms of disruption his *maquisards* were among the most effective of the Resistance.

From mid-1943, with an Allied invasion of occupied France in prospect, de Gaulle wanted the resistance armies placed under a *député militaire national* (DMN), and Bourgès-Maunoury was the original French choice for this post. But his appointment was blocked by the British on account of his age — he was still then under 30 — in spite of his excellent record. Ironically the British did not object to the second French choice as DMN, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, though he was actually six months younger than



Bourgès-Maunoury. (He, too, was to become a French prime minister.) "Polygone" did not repine. His command continued to be a thorn in the side of the Germans, and in 1944, with French and American forces advancing on Lyons and Grenoble in the wake of the "Anvil" landings in the south of France, he was able to report that his *maquisards* were in total control of all the crucial *départements* of the region. He was subsequently severely wounded and de Gaulle himself pinned the cross of a *Compagnon de*

la Libération on him as he lay in hospital.

Immediately after the war he became a regional commissioner for Bordeaux and began his political life when he was elected to the French Assembly as a Radical party deputy for Haute-Garonne in 1946. This, in a sense, ensured that, unlike some of his fellow resisters, who were close to de Gaulle, he remained in spirit a South-Western regional deputy. He served in a succession of government posts, beginning as secretary of state for the budget in 1947. He was at various times defence minister, armaments minister, minister of public works, finance minister and minister of the interior.

In 1954 he fell out with Mendès-France over the sluggish progress towards the realisation of the European Defence Community. He was minister of defence during the Suez crisis of 1956 and as such was in charge of France's overall military participation. It was in the Guy Mollat government of 1956-57 that his conviction of the necessity of victory over the Algerian rebels reached its apogee, and he ordered the recall of Messis, and the vigorous prosecution of the military campaign.

Ironically, after less than four months as prime minister, he was himself brought down on September 30, 1957, when right-wing hardliners defeated his government's Algerian outline bill. This promised a degree of reform in the territory as part of a political rather than military solution. But such an apparently illogical end to one of his conservative convictions suggested no change of heart on his part, merely the hopelessness of expecting any coherent policy from governments cobbled together from such disparate elements as this one was. In the event the Fourth Republic itself had not

HAROLD TAYLOR

Harold Alexander Taylor, a champion of innovative education in the United States, died in New York on February 9, aged 78. He was born in Toronto on September 28, 1914.

HAROLD Taylor's ideas about higher education were nothing if not unconventional and when he became the youngest college president in America in 1945 at the age of 30, he found an opportunity to put them into practice. The institution concerned was Sarah Lawrence College in Yonkers, New York, which was an all-female campus at that time, and one of the most expensive in the country.

Sarah Lawrence, founded in 1928 as America's first college to offer "progressive" education, with no system of required courses, fitted Taylor's style to perfection. He laid down his marker in 1947, when he told a teachers' conference: "This business of knowledge through suffering is rubbish. The whole educational system has become one massive quiz programme with the prizes going to the most enterprising, most repulsively well-informed person — the man with his hand up first."

Under Taylor, Sarah Lawrence gave no grades or report cards. Classes were few and small in size. Instead, students developed their own courses of independent study, in close consultation with professors, and received detailed evaluations. Informally was the rule, with students allowed to wear blue jeans long before they became the norm elsewhere.

They governed themselves democratically, and took turns with such chores as waiting at tables and scrubbing floors.

Sarah Lawrence had an almost all-white enrollment when Taylor arrived. He pressed hard for racial integration. And when McCarthyism reared its unattractive head he fought for academic freedom.

Retiring from Sarah Lawrence in 1959, Taylor taught at the New School for Social Research and City University of New York, founded the Centre for International Service at Staten Island College, led the National Committee for Support of the Public Schools, and even became the host of a network television series called *Meet the Professor* for a couple of years. He was later chairman of the Peace Research Institute and National Research Council on Peace Strategy, a human rights adviser to Adlai Stevenson, and a leader of the US Committee on the United Nations University.

His many books included *Students Without Teachers: The Crisis in the University*, published in 1969, which a *New York Times* reviewer described as "a blueprint for radical change in the whole style and purpose of our colleges and universities."

Educated at the University of Toronto, where he gained his bachelor's and master's degrees, Taylor received his PhD from the University of London in 1938, earning his living meanwhile by editing a newspaper on modern jazz and leading an orchestra on board a cruise liner.

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS

Christopher Morris, historian and Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, since 1930, died on February 17 aged 87. He was born on January 24, 1906.

EXCEPT for war work in the Foreign Office between 1940 and 1945, and two sabbatical leaves spent at the Princeton Institute, Christopher Morris taught history at Cambridge for something like forty years. He was at King's even longer, having first arrived there from Haileybury in 1924, and was still enjoying his rooms in college up to the time of his death.

For the university he lectured mainly, prior to 1950, on English history under the Tudors and Stuarts, and afterwards on the history of political thought. In college he could supervise a very wide range of subjects, including some, such as American and Indian history, which he taught himself in middle and later life.

He was a first-rate supervisor, partly because his youthful zest for argument was as lively to the last as in his undergraduate days, still more because of his profound, spontaneous interest in people, not least those he taught. His memory for his old pupils and for his own undergraduate contemporaries was remarkable. The same connoisseurship in humanity helped to make him an excellent examiner, judicious, meticulous and indefatigable.

and over and over again he served as chairman. To the surprise of his colleagues, he seemed to like it. He also gave unstinted service to the faculty of history as Society Librarian, as well as serving the university as Junior Proctor as long ago as 1938.

But he probably felt most at home within King's. The Political Society there was founded by Oscar Browning for historical discussion in 1876. Christopher Morris succeeded Sir John Clapham as its president and held the office for 30 years. For this, as for the leadership of any discussion group, he was admirably fitted by his gaily temperament, his love of the provocative, his constant championing of the unorthodox, minority opinion — often left-wing, but often, too, decidedly old-fashioned. Some of the papers with which he opened each session foregrounded his books: *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, which he edited in 1947, *Political Thought in England: Tyndale to Hooker* (1935) and *The Tudors* (1955), which was translated into Italian.

His *Western Political Thought, Plato to Augustine* (1967) was to have been the first of three volumes; but it received shamefully few reviews and nothing like the attention its lively presentation deserved. Disappointment was much assuaged by the invitation to deliver the first A.J. Carlyle Lectures at Oxford in 1975, which were entitled *Survivals and Reviv-*

alism in Medieval Political Thought. After his retirement from his teaching posts at King's in 1971, he directed studies for Girton College for three years; and he was twice visiting professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz. In

1989 he published *King's College: A Short History*. Christopher Morris was married in 1933 to the Elizabethan scholar, Helen Soutar. They had one daughter and one son, the former of whom, together with his wife, survives him.



HUGH GORDON PORTEUS

Hugh Gordon Porteus, literary and art critic, died in Cheltenham on January 23 aged 87. He was born in Leeds on January 13, 1906.

HUGH Porteus was one of those writers who gave of his best in conversation rather than in the written word. But that generous best acted as a stimulant to all his friends, young and old, for he was a man of singularly sweet disposition, who failed to make his mark, at least in part, by dint of a lack of ambition extraordinary — and, alas, exemplary — in the literary world. His characterisation of literary and artistic people managed to be shrewdly exact, and therefore valuable, without ever becoming malicious. Thus, he rightly deprecated Ezra Pound's actual knowledge of the Chinese language (on one occasion Pound discussed the merits of a Chinese poem, with Arthur Waley of all people, while holding it upside down), but would not allow that he lacked instructive intuition on the subject of Chinese poetry.

Hugh Gordon Porteus was the son of a factory inspector. Rebelling against his father, he secretly studied Russian and, after a spell at school at Huddersfield, came to London where he worked, as did so many like him in the interwar years, as an advertising copywriter. He wrote sporadically for the *Little Art* and literary magazines of the period, including Julian Symonds's *Twentieth Century Verse*. He

was peculiarly, and objectively, enlightening on the subject of the fearful and abusive quarrel (amusedly resolved) between Symonds and Geoffrey Grigson, who ran the more prestigious *New Verse*.

Porteus's only book of real note appeared in 1932. It was *Wyndham Lewis: A Discursive Exposition*. There have been many books on Lewis since, but this remains one of the liveliest and most enlightening, no doubt in part because, although in general admiring, it refused to treat its iconoclastic subject with any degree of awe. Porteus by no means worshipped the conventions, but he was not going to worship those who openly challenged them, either. His essay "A Man Apart", in a special issue of *Agenda* magazine (1969-70) devoted to Lewis, added greatly to his first book on him.

Porteus served with RAF Signals in the Middle East during the war, and thereafter became a man who, in the words of one of his friends, "might surface in any literary office at about four in the afternoon, hinting at work."

Unfortunately, like Lewis — who for a time he had imitated, right down to cloak and sinister wide hat — he was quite unable to fulfil editors' requirements as to space. Once he got a book to review, he would discuss it at as great a length as he felt it, and he, deserved. It became hopeless, and his opportunities withered and quickly died away. Yet it is not too

much to say that, had there been a philanthropic magazine devoted to his "discursive expositions", it would have been altogether more useful and amusing than all the rest put together.

Unlike a certain younger contemporary, Hugh did not charge a fee to "listen to him think"; he might well have done, and it would have been money well spent. He eked out a living by working at the Central Office of Information, and in 1952 — his one conspicuous success — the BBC broadcast an exuberant verse play which was universally admired and enjoyed. His uproarious surreal stories about himself and others were distinguished by the way in which they separated fact from fantasy, so that the listener knew perfectly well which was which, and could revel in them without anxiety. Only those who lacked a sense of humour fared less well with him.

When young he painted a little, wrote the worthy *Background to Chinese Art* (1935), and made some excellent, unpublished, translations from Chinese poetry — he knew Chinese far better than Pound. Before leaving for the war he had married his longtime companion, the Ukrainian ballet critic Rosinka Bartec. They later separated, but remained friends. Finally, he entered a Sue Ryder home in Cheltenham, where he kept himself alive by enjoying life and entertaining his friends to the very end.

Robert Jacobsen

ROBERT Jacobsen, Danish sculptor, died on January 26 aged 80. He was born in Copenhagen in 1912. His early works were a good deal influenced by German Expressionism. But in mid-career he inclined more towards abstraction. He had begun his working life as a peasant but through out his childhood, art was one of his interests. Rodin had been the primary early influence on him, but German

Expressionism persuaded him to become a sculptor.

He was self-taught. With his friend the painter and sculptor Henry Heerup he would rove the junk yards of Copenhagen, both men seeking images for their work. At that stage Jacobsen's and Heerup's art had certain affinities. Jacobsen had a predilection for the stark forms of Viking art which consoled well with his monolithic granite sculptures.

Throughout the 1930s the bulk of Jacobsen's output consisted of wooden carvings, but in 1941 he joined the Danish

HOST group, whose leanings were towards surrealism. This led to a series of wood carvings of fabulous beasts. But he also produced more decidedly abstract works — in stone, for the first time.

When he moved to Paris in 1947 he selected metal as his working medium, to produce virile welded sheet steel sculptures. Jacobsen became greatly interested in the nature of mechanical movement, and sought to imbue works created from inert fragments of scrap with an inner dynamism. Working sheet steel in its cold state, he left the spectator with

a potent sense of the creative processes through which the finished artefact had been wrought out of its chaotic origins.

His celebrated *Dolls* series, which uses mechanical components taken from junk yards, is striking for its humour and for Jacobsen's ability effortlessly to suggest human types with the least human of discarded materials. In a slightly different mode, "Le Crapaud amoureux" in the Stockholm National Museum represents Jacobsen at his most characteristic, in the sheer fantasy of its conception.

Richard Salant

RICHARD Salant, former president of CBS News, died in Fairfield, Connecticut, on February 16 aged 78. He was born in New York on April 14, 1914.

Dick Salant had two bites at the cherry as Head of CBS

News in a period notable for the network's dramatic coverage of many historical events: the assassination of President Kennedy, the Apollo 11 moon landing, and the Vietnam war.

He was originally appointed to the job in 1961, but was replaced in 1964 by the distinguished journalist Fred Friendly. Salant spent the next

two years in less demanding roles, as special assistant to the president of CBS's parent company, and as a vice-president of corporate affairs.

However, in 1966 the Independent-minded Friendly resigned his post in protest against CBS's decision to discontinue live coverage of the hearings on Vietnam which were being conducted by the

senate Foreign Relations Committee. Salant was called to the helm again, this time remaining as head of the news organisation until his retirement in 1979.

Among his achievements were the introduction of the popular CBS news magazine *60 Minutes* and the network's morning news programme.

PERSONAL COLUMN

RENTALS

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حزب العمال



PROFILE 22

The man calling
British companies
to account



CRICKET 40

Hick cuts
loose in
Bombay Test



RUGBY UNION 38

Wales renewing
old rivalries
in Edinburgh

WEEKEND
SPORTING
FIXTURES
Page 35

THE TIMES

2

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20 1993

WEEKEND
MONEY

TAX REFEREE



Taxpayers have an
independent
adjudicator to sort out
complaints and check
the Revenue is sticking
to its own standards
Page 25

JOBLESS TRAP

Newly unemployed
people who do not sign
on immediately could
lose credit insurance
payments
Page 30

CLAIM WAIT



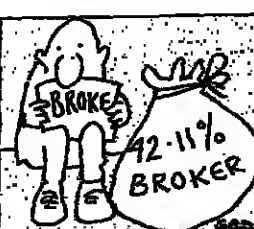
Vera Hawkins is
waiting for the courts to
decide if she can claim
compensation for a
home income plan
Page 26

HIDDEN COST



Lenders are cutting
rates but charging for
related services without
including them in the
total cost
Page 27

PENSION PERK



A broker earned a
commission of 42.11
per cent or £8,422 for
arranging a £20,000
pension
Letters, page 32

THE POUND

US \$ 1.4555 (+0.0145)
3-month interest 6.1-6.25
US Federal Funds 2.75
Bank of England official close (4pm)
FT-SE 100 2840.0 (+2.3)
Dow Jones 3298.88 (-3.51)
Nikkei Average 17010.03 (+27.89)

STOCK MARKET

FT-SE 100 2840.0 (+2.3)
Dow Jones 3298.88 (-3.51)
Nikkei Average 17010.03 (+27.89)

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base 6%
3-month interest 6.1-6.25
US Federal Funds 2.75
3-month Treas Bill 2.92-2.90%
Long Bond 7.02%

CURRENCIES

New York: London 1.4555 (+0.0145)
CS 1.4530 (+0.0145)
\$DM 1.6355 (+0.0145)
\$SWF 1.5057 (+0.0145)
\$Fr 5.5405 (+0.0145)
\$Yen 119.08 (+0.0145)
\$SDR 1.0380 (+0.0145)
London Foreign market close

GOLD

London Fixing (5): PM 330.80
AM 331.10
Close 330.05-330.55
New York
Comex 330.75-331.25

RETAIL PRICES

RPI 137.9 January (1.7%)
* Denotes midday trading price

Wise Men tell ministers to cut borrowing

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

THE government should
not raise taxes this year
because the risks to the
economy remain too great,
according to six out of seven
members of the Treasury's
independent forecasting panel.
However, a majority
advocate a wait-and-see
approach on further interest
rate cuts.

In their first report to the
Chancellor, published yester-
day, the panel emphasise the
need to avoid action that
would jeopardise recovery.
Their average growth forecast
for this year is 1.1 per cent, but
two members predict 0.5 per
cent or less. "Given the length
and depth of the recession,
another year of flat or declin-
ing output would be extremely
damaging to the UK econ-
omy," the economists say.

The panel say the govern-
ment should get out a clear
strategy in the Budget for
making substantial cuts in the
public sector borrowing re-
quirement, but should not
impose higher taxes this year.
Tax increases in future years
should depend on clear evi-
dence of a healthy recovery or
— in the view of Professor
Wynne Godley, of the Cam-
bridge Economic Policy
Group — the emergence of
balance of payments or other
supply-side constraints.

Standing outside the fiscal
consensus is Professor Tim
Congdon, of Lombard Street
Research, who argues that tax
increases should be an-
nounced in March to demon-
strate the government's
commitment to putting pub-
lic-sector finances on a sustain-
able path.

Five out of seven members
of the panel advocate leaving
base rates unchanged at 6 per

cent unless the economy weak-
ens further in the next few
months or sterling appreciates
significantly. Professor Patrick
Minford, of Liverpool Univer-
sity, and Gavin Davies, of
Goldman Sachs, argue for
further cuts soon. Mr Davies
would make them conditional
on a strategy for bringing
down the PSBR.

The panel advise the govern-
ment against an early re-
turn of sterling to the
exchange rate mechanism
and say there should be no
explicit exchange-rate target at
present.

The Seven Wise Men unan-
imously recommend the gov-
ernment to suspend the full
funding rule, under which the

Wise men 1
A very British meeting 2

PSBR has to be financed
entirely by sales of gilt-edged
stock to the private sector,
excluding banks and building
societies. If banks were
allowed and encouraged to
buy government bonds, the
panel argues, bank and build-
ing society deposits would
increase and encourage re-
newed lending to the private
sector, crucial to recovery.

The report says that a rise in
the RPI (excluding mort-
gages) above its 1 to 4 per cent
target range should not be
taken on its own as a sign that
the government should raise
interest rates, "providing it
reflects a one-off adjustment of
the price level to the lower
exchange rate". The panel

broadly agrees with the assess-
ment of inflationary trends by
the Treasury and the Bank of
England. Their average fore-
cast for underlying inflation is
3.9 per cent at the end of this
year, falling to 3.5 per cent by
the end of 1994. However,
they say there is a risk of
renewed inflationary pressure
once recovery is under way
and argue that the govern-
ment should be prepared to
raise interest rates to counter
this threat, particularly if pay
settlements start to rise.

Growth forecasts vary wide-
ly. Andrew Britton, of the
National Institute of Econo-
mic and Social Research, is the
most optimistic, predicting
growth of 2 per cent. Professor
Godley forecasts 0.5 per cent
and Professor Minford, only
0.2 per cent.

Their unemployment fore-
casts are uniformly gloomy.
All seven predict that the
number out of work will rise
further this year; six out of
seven believe it will still be
above three million at the end
of next year.

The seven members of the
panel are: Mr Britton; David
Currie, of the London Busi-
ness School; Professor
Congdon; Andrew Sentance,
of the Confederation of British
Industry; Professor Minford;
Professor Godley; and Mr
Davies.

□ Sterling had a good day,
helped by heavy buying over-
night. The trade-weighted in-
dex rose from 76.7 to 77.4,
buoyed by a rise against the
mark from DM23565 to
DM23779. The pound rose
from \$1.4410 to \$1.4555.

Leyland van team waives rights

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ALMOST 200 Leyland DAF
workers in Birmingham have
signed away possible redun-
dancy rights, so that develop-
ment of a new van, to be built
in France, can be completed.

Administrative receivers to
the collapsed Leyland DAF
group have contacted to pro-
vide staff to finish the new
Excel van being jointly devel-
oped in Birmingham by Ley-
land DAF and France's state-
controlled Renault group.

To secure the work, 190
engineers, technicians, man-
agers and others involved in
the project were asked to sign a
letter waiving any claims
against Renault. The French
company was apparently con-
cerned that they might have
had continuity of employment
rights under EC legislation.
The agreement to maintain

the project team, which also
includes 50 Renault engineers
working in Birmingham, was
struck as administrators to
DAF, Leyland DAF's Dutch
parent, undertook not to de-
clare any redundancies before
February 27.

Dutch unions had feared
that half the 6,500 workers in
Holland and Belgium might
be laid off yesterday. But hard
bargaining by British banks
owned money by the collapsed
group appears to be holding
up attempts to complete a
rescue package sponsored by
the Dutch and Belgian
governments.

Talks among bankers to
enable a New DAF company
to be established are expected
to continue over the weekend.
Leyland DAF receivers and
Renault officials are also seek-

ing to complete an agreement
on the future of the Excel
project in time for an an-
nouncement early next week.

Officials from the govern-
ment's arbitration and concil-
iation service were called to the
Birmingham van plant on
Thursday to advise on the
disclaimer letters, but declined
to become involved.

Shop stewards at the van
plant believe the disclaimer
have no legal force. But work-
ers on the project, who are
committed to finishing the
new vehicle, are furious that
union objections might jeop-
ardise both completion of their
work and the possibility that
some members of the team
might be hired permanently
by Renault.

There appears scant pros-
pect that the van, which was to

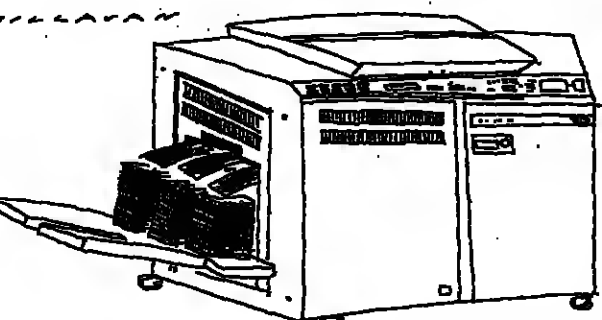
have been built by Leyland
DAF in Birmingham and by
Renault at Batilly, in eastern
France, will ever go into
production in Britain.

According to a letter from
Stuart Heys, the Excel project
director, to the shop stewards'
committee, workers remain-
ing on the project have been
offered from three to nine
months' work. Final design
work is likely to be completed
in France. Some jobs may be
available in France for British
engineers.

The intellectual property
rights to the van design are
owned by both Renault and
Leyland DAF. The French
group has held discussions
with Volkswagen and Mer-
cedes-Benz about replacing
Leyland DAF as partner in the
project.

To photocopying documents — \$6.7m

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON
IN NEW YORK



PRICE WATERHOUSE, the
accountant, is being criticised
for giving the American
government what could be the
world's largest photocopying
bill — for almost \$6.7 million.
The accountant's charge
relates to an assessment of
assets of HomeFed Bank, a
collapsed savings and loan
association based in San
Diego.

Price Waterhouse was
working for the Resolution
Trust Corporation (RTC), a
quasi-government agency
charged with sorting out the
collapsed industry.

Investigators for RTC
claim that PW used tempo-
rary help to photocopy 10
million documents, but billed
RTC at \$35 an hour, the cost
of full-time staff.

An inspector for RTC said
this worked out at 67 cents

per page of copying and did
not include machine or paper
costs. Photocopying can usu-
ally be done for 12-15 cents a
page.

The RTC later said Price
Waterhouse had agreed to cut
\$4 million from its fee for
handling and copying the
documents. The firm itself
volunteered to adjust the bill.

In a statement, Price
Waterhouse rejected allega-
tions that the photocopying

bill came to 67 cents page,
claiming the cost of actually
copying the documents was
between five and eight cents
per page. However, it said
because of a Department of
Justice subpoena, extraordi-
nary measures were necessary
so that copies could be used
as legal evidence.

"These included protection
against loss or damage, main-
taining document control
logs, comparison of all copies

with originals and maintain-
ing copies in precisely the
same order they were kept in
the HomeFed files."

PW added: "It is important
to bear in mind the collapse of
HomeFed was the largest
S&L failure in American his-
tory. Price Waterhouse's role
has been to assist the RTC in
the sale of the \$13 billion
S&L's assets to maximise
recoveries and limit losses
that, in the end, would be
borne by the [American] tax-
payer."

In a letter on HomeFed cost
overruns to Albert Casey, RTC
chief executive, Lloyd Ben-
sen, treasury secretary, said:
"Of the total fees of about
\$100 million, it would appear
much of this represents exces-
sive costs and excessive mark-
ups by contractors." He has
urged Mr Casey to conduct a
thorough review of these con-
tracts and take steps to recov-
er excessive payments.

BA flies in the eye of the storm

By COLIN NARBROUGH

UNDER a hail of fire from
rival airlines on both sides of
the Atlantic, Robert Ayling,
after only ten days in office as
managing director of British
Airways, remains calm.

Virgin Atlantic's initial rush
for early compensation from
BA for damage arising from
the "dirty tricks" campaign
has slowed. The latest dead-
line for conducting the "peace
talks" between Virgin and BA
had been this weekend, but
now has been rolled forward
for an unspecified period.

Both sides have maintained
strict silence on details of the
talks, but it is understood that
Mr Ayling feels that BA is not
under the same pressure to
conclude an early accord as it
was when the dialogue was
opened last month. Virgin,
which has threatened further
legal action if it is not satisfied
by a deal, wants greater access
to Heathrow.

Mr Ayling indicated yester-
day that BA is relaxed about
the various moves in progress
against the airline on both
sides of the Atlantic. Air
France's request this week for
the European Court of First
Instance to quash the Com-
mission's ruling allowing BA
to take 49.9 per cent of TAT,
the French domestic carrier,
and its challenge to Brussels'
go-ahead to the BA takeover of
Dan-Air, are seen as normal
background noise in a highly
competitive industry.

First indications that the
Clinton administration will be
tougher on BA than the Bush
team, possibly jeopardising
BA's stake in USAir, are also
being treated at BA as part of
the normal political turbu-
lence associated with the air-
line industry in America.

□ BA has appointed its first
woman director, Valerie
Sculiar, 37, the new head of
human resources, has been
with the airline since joining
as a graduate trainee in the
mid-seventies.

Air wars, page 23

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Closure threat to Digital plants

BY OUR CITY STAFF

THE threat of closure is hanging over two major computer factories that together employ nearly 2,300 workers. Digital, the loss-making multinational, is thought to be considering closing a plant at either Ayr, in Scotland, or Galway, in the Irish Republic, as part of a review of its operations.

The Ayr factory, with nearly 1,000 workers, started 13 years ago and is the area's biggest employer. Almost 1,300 jobs are at risk at the Irish factory which, with subcontracting work, accounts for about 25 per cent of Galway's total industrial employment.

Scottish interests and the Dublin government have been lobbying hard to save their plants. Sources refused to comment on reports that Albert Reynolds, the Irish prime minister, had been in contact with senior Digital officials in an effort to prevent redundancies in Galway adding to the country's near 20 per cent employment rate.

Digital, which employs more than 100,000 people worldwide, made a £2.8 billion loss last year: it is expected to announce the results of a review of its manufacturing capacity in Europe next week.

The group's other two main European manufacturing centres are in France and Germany. Worldwide, Digital is believed to want to cut its workforce by a quarter, by closing four or five plants.

A Digital spokesman said yesterday: "An announcement will be made sooner rather than later as part of the review of manufacturing capacity in Europe. There have been a load of options on the table."

Packer manager resigns

Kerry Packer, the Australian entrepreneur, has parted company with Al Dunlap, his American managing director, only two years into Mr Dunlap's five-year contract. The American was brought in to restructure Mr Packer's Australian Consolidated Press conglomerate in 1991.

Mr Packer said in a statement that reports of a rift between himself and Mr Dunlap were "incorrect and unwarranted".

Several senior executives have left Consolidated Press in the past two years. Trevor Kennedy resigned as managing director in 1991. He was followed by Don Bourke, the finance director, and Graham Lawrence, the advertising director.

Back in black

United Plantations Africa, with interests ranging from citrus fruits to tobacco, reported a pre-tax profit of 3.19 million rand (£718,000) in 1992, compared with a R4.53 million loss previously. Turnover rose to R37.8 million (£31.4 million). There is a six cent dividend.

Payout passed

Losses at BCE, an amusement centres group, grew from £20,000 to £168,000 in the six months to September. The interim dividend is passed. The snooker manufacturing division, now disposed of, represented £52,000 of the losses.

Lopex rights

Lopex, an advertising and marketing services group, is raising £3.5 million in a rights issue. Investors are being offered shares at 17p on a one-for-one basis: an employee trust is underwriting part of the issue.

Waste contract

Wessex Waste Management, a subsidiary of Wessex Water, has won a £9.8 million a year contract to dispose of Avon's domestic waste.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

US revolution

Clinton is proposing a revolution, aimed at repealing Ronald Reagan's tax reforms and conservative efforts to shrink government. To Reagan, government was the problem; to Clinton, it is the solution...

Irwin Stelzer - Business Focus, The Sunday Times tomorrow



Big bite: Michael Guthrie controlled Prima Pasta when he was Mecca chief; now his new company has got the 43 restaurants back

Guthrie buys pizza chain from Rank

BY SUSAN GILCHRIST

MICHAEL Guthrie, former chairman of Mecca, has bought back the Prima Pasta restaurant chain from Rank Organisation as part of a deal worth £20.25 million, which also includes the Pizza Piazza brand.

The 43 restaurants will be added to the 122 Pizzaland outlets owned by Mr Guthrie's company, Bright Reasons, which were bought for an estimated £20 million from Grand Metropolitan in February 1991.

Bright Reasons was set up in 1990 after Rank's successful bid for Mecca, which then owned Prima Pasta. Yesterday's deal will add about £20 million to the company's current turnover of £50 million.

Bright Reasons will pay £19 million in cash on completion and the balance in October 1994. The acquisition is backed by Mercury Development Capital and Montagu Private Equity, with Samuel Montagu and Bank of Scotland providing debt facilities.

This is the second deal Mr Guthrie has done with Rank. His other company, Pavilion Services, bought 11 motorway service stations from the leisure group for £86 million in December 1991.

Warren Stein, Rank's investor relations manager, said of yesterday's sale: "It is part of our strategy of focusing on a narrower range of activities."

The company had done as much as it could to improve returns in the Prima Pasta restaurants. "The next step was either to acquire a lot more locations or get out. Pizzaland solved the problem by coming along with an attractive and well financed offer."

Rank has come under increasing criticism from analysts for its rising mountain of debt, which stood at just under £1 billion at its year end. Gearing now exceeds 70 per cent.

US declares air wars on BA

FROM HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT, IN DALLAS

IN dozens of American Airline offices across the United States, huge red, white and blue signs scream "Help defeat BA/USAir".

Below the war cry is a petition every employee is asked to sign, and a leaflet urging a "call to arms" and a letter writing campaign to the White House aimed at forcing President Clinton to halt BA's attempt to buy a stake in the ailing American carrier.

Ed Faberman, vice-president of government affairs for American Airlines, said: "Our people were instrumental in helping us block the BA investment in December by blitzing Washington with more than 100,000 letters. With their help, we can prevent BA and USAir from implementing a proposal that will be just as unfair to US carriers as the original."

airline industry. Many airline leaders see a potential ally in the Clinton administration, which is setting up a 15-man commission to recommend ways to strengthen the sector.

Federico Pena, US transport secretary, said: "The US aviation industry is a barometer of the health of the American economy and a benchmark for our global competitiveness." Faced with total losses of \$8 billion over the last three years and huge job losses in both Boeing and McDonnell Douglas, airlines are looking for scapegoats wherever they can find them. Europe and especially BA, which is still making profits, fit the bill.

American Airlines is planning to send back at least 25 of the European-built A300 Airbus jets it operates and fly American-built aircraft instead. Robert Crandall, AA chairman, says the decision was for "purely economic reasons" and not political.

The fresh job losses at Boeing, however, and growing concern in Congress

makes the decision to abandon Airbus much more politically acceptable. With new-found optimism, Mr Crandall is putting pressure on Washington to maintain a strict limit on the amount of foreign investment allowed in American airlines.

He said: "Neither investments nor linkage mechanisms should be approved until US carriers are assured of fully equivalent competitive opportunities." These include "to serve our customers with our own employees, to get landing slots for our flights or to sell our computerised reservations systems".

American airlines claim Britain is protectionist. They want unlimited access to Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow airports and Heathrow slots to be taken away from BA and given to them. If the British government fails to agree to these demands, they argue, the bilateral agreement between the two countries should be torn up and the BA/USAir deal outlawed.

French republic with those of Air France."

Air France has also charged the commission with failing to uphold EC law in allowing BA's takeover of TAT, the French regional carrier. Both takeovers infuriated M Attali, who left Sir Leo Brittan, Mr Van Miert's predecessor, was biased towards BA.

World airlines may have made losses totalling \$7 billion last year, Pieter Bouw, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines chairman, told an industry symposium.

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The fresh job losses at Boeing, however, and growing concern in Congress

Dan-Air case lands EC in court

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE British Airways/Dan-Air debate has been thrown wide open by Air France's decision to take the European Commission to the European Court of Justice for allegedly failing to uphold European community law in allowing the takeover.

The notice in the EC's official journal appeared after the new competition commissioner, Karel Van Miert, had apparently closed the dossier on the case by ruling out a separate Belgian complaint about BA's dominance on the

Brussels-London route. Adding to the confusion, the French government confirmed that it was still awaiting a reply from Mr Van Miert over specific complaints made by Michel Sapin, the French finance minister, over the Dan-Air case.

The complaints resemble arguments put forward by Bernard Attali, chairman of Air France, but a French official in Brussels stressed that "it is quite wrong to associate the activities of the

French republic with those of Air France."

Air France has also charged the commission with failing to uphold EC law in allowing BA's takeover of TAT, the French regional carrier. Both takeovers infuriated M Attali, who left Sir Leo Brittan, Mr Van Miert's predecessor, was biased towards BA.

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Edencorp chief attacked by DTI

BY PATRICIA TEHAN

THE Department of Trade and Industry has launched a scathing attack on Michael Wallace, chairman and chief executive of Edencorp Leisure, the club and theme park group which collapsed into receivership in 1991 with £7.8 million debts.

In a report into the affairs of Edencorp, DTI inspectors found that Mr Wallace "withdrew large sums from group companies without the board's knowledge or approval and without regard to the interests of shareholders".

There is unlikely to be any criminal action. The DTI appears to have decided against it, and Touche Ross, the company's administrative receivers, have no powers to turn to the courts to chase funds where no indebtedness has been proved. Under the Insolvency Act 1986, only a liquidator can resort to litigation to recover funds. But a spokesman for Touche said yesterday that since all the assets of Edencorp have been sold, there are not enough funds to be distributed to justify a liquidator.

Edencorp was floated on the Third Market in 1989. Under Mr Wallace it had pursued an aggressive acquisition policy in Portugal and the UK. By autumn 1990, "the company realised too late that its financial position was considerably less stable than believed". Mr Wallace resigned in December 1990 on the grounds of ill-health and the company announced that he had received "substantial, unauthorised and unlawful loans from the company", according to the report. He was reinstated in May 1991, on the platform of introducing fresh capital to the group. But no fresh capital materialised and the company's bankers, led by Standard Chartered, appointed receivers in July. The loans are believed to total over £600,000.

The report also criticised Godfrey Cook, the company's financial director, finding that he was "negligent in carrying out his professional duties".

UB confirms Terry's sell-off discussions

BY SUSAN GILCHRIST

UNITED Biscuits, the McVities to KP snacks manufacturer, has confirmed it is in discussions with potential buyers for its Terry's chocolate business, in a move that could leave Cadbury Schweppes as the only large British confectionery manufacturer.

Talks are believed to have been in progress for several weeks, but the sticking point has been price, according to a source close to the company. UB wants around £250 million to reduce its mounting debts, now at £540 million, which have pushed gearing close to 90 per cent. Analysts

believe £200 million is a more realistic price for a company making trading profits of about £15 million.

Michael Landy, a leading food analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "The balance sheet is looking stretched, therefore it is not surprising that UB should be contemplating a major trade sale to restore comfort to the ratios."

Robert Clarke, UB chairman, said there were "several interested parties" although he declined to identify them. Speculation has centred on Philip Morris, the American tobacco giant that owns Jacobs Suchard, Hershey, the largest confectionery company in the US; and Cadbury Schweppes.

One analyst reflected whether Hershey, which recently lost out to Philip Morris in a bid for Freix Marabou, would have "the stomach for another fight". Cadbury could be constrained by the threat of a monopolies referral.

UB may also use the proceeds to fund more acquisitions, including Royal Brands, a Spanish food company, and possibly Derwent Valley Foods, owner of the Philias Fogg brand.

Ross Young, the frozen food firm, is cited as another disposal candidate.

Builder's losses cut to £21m

TRENCHWOOD, the housebuilder that completed a £64 million debt restructuring in January, reduced its pre-tax loss for the year to October from £38 million to £21 million.

The improvement was made in the second half, with a loss of £5 million in the six months to October against a £16 million deficit last time. The company is not paying a dividend because of a lack of distributable reserves.

Poor trading conditions affected house sales, with only 165 units sold against 306 in 1991. Turnover for the year declined to £19 million from £29 million.

However, John Norgate, chairman of Trenchwood, sees cause for optimism on the residential side and reports a significant increase in reservations since December. The company has a forward land bank of 7,527 plots, of which 1,166 have planning consent.

Trenchwood sold £5 million of commercial property during the year and further sales are planned as the company continues to focus on housebuilding. Richard Brooke, finance director of Trenchwood, said the company's business plan did not depend on asset sales.



Clarke: sticking point

Sparks fly over steel pay

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

CONFRONTATION is escalating between IG Metall, the German metalworkers' union, and industry over plans for massive cuts in steelmaking capacity and jobs, and attempts to scrap an agreement to bring eastern German pay to western levels.

The likelihood of a spring of unrest was increased when arbitration talks over a wage dispute for metalworkers in the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt broke down yesterday. Regional employers want to rewrite a pay deal set two years ago, whereby eastern German workers would receive a 26 per cent increase from April as part of the catch-up with the west. Employers have offered 9 per cent, but the union insists the old deal must stand.

Breakdown in the pay talks followed a one-day wildcat strike at a steel plant in Siegen, western Germany, and demonstrations by 20,000 steelworkers in the Ruhr, the industrial heartland threatened with plant closures and an explosion in unemployment. IG Metall called for a mass march on Bonn next month to protest against European Commission demands to shed up to 30,000 steel jobs in western Germany and 10,000 in the East as part of an EC-wide restructuring.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl appealed to industry and unions this week to negotiate a downward revision in wage deals in eastern Germany, arguing it

was vital to improve the region's devastated economy. IG Metall said it would urge its members to strike to force employers to honour standing commitments. Union leaders fear any reneging on deals in the East would set a precedent that could herald the end to the consensual industrial relations in the West too.

In seeking voluntary cuts, Thyssen, Germany's biggest steelmaker, has opened talks with its rivals, Krupp-Hoesch and Saarstahl, over co-operation in long products. Thyssen wants to cut 600,000 tonnes' capacity, as is Krupp-Hoesch, which has said it will have to close all its structural steel plants if the talks fail.

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WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20 1993

Edited by Lindsay Cook

Ruling to speed up claims

The High Court's decision this week should have speeded up the claims procedure for thousands of elderly people who were sold home income plans by brokers and have lost thousands of pounds as a result.

Several of those claiming or intending to claim from the Investors Compensation Scheme have died before any money could be paid out. Until Tuesday, their claims died with them. The High Court ruled, however, that financial institutions should not benefit from their tardiness.

Home income plans are sold to people in their seventies and eighties so that they can use part of the value of their home to raise an income. Those that went wrong involved investment bonds being bought with the money to provide an income. But the bonds have fallen in value, as have the homes on which the loans were secured. At the same time, mortgage rates soared, reducing the income received.

Sorting out the mess has been difficult because there are usually

two or more financial institutions involved and, in many cases, they have expended much energy blaming each other or joining forces to blame the solicitor who did not warn the homeowners of the risks.

The pensioners have also been accused of being greedy and not telling the truth. Brokers have claimed they explained all the potential risks for the schemes. But too many people were told they would receive a fixed amount each month and naively thought the bonds were similar to bank or building society accounts paying out interest with no risk to their lump sum.

The Financial Intermediaries Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association subsequently issued guidelines on the selling of such plans. These detailed the many ways in which money could be lost and officials are confident they have put an end to old people being sold such



COMMENT
LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

high-risk plans. Now the companies have nothing to gain by the death of claimants, they may be more willing to settle claims while the elderly people still have time to enjoy the compensation.

It is partly the fact that brokers, mortgage lenders, and investment groups are involved that delays have occurred. For once, the insurance industry has settled up more quickly, when dealing with similar cases. Its cases tend to be simpler, as they involve tied agents dealing with only one insurance company.

While the companies may not

rush to pay out, they have been firmly prodded in that direction by Dr Julian Farrand, the Insurance Ombudsman and his team.

Now is the time to consider establishing one office that can handle complaints for the whole financial services industry. Discussions are going on to introduce a single regulator for private investors. A single complaints office must be an integral part of any such arrangement. It would reduce the number of disappointed investors who receive letters months after they have complained to one regulator, telling

them that they should apply elsewhere for help.

The investors are worn down by the system set up to protect them.

Promises check

Yet again, life offices are being called to account for misleading marketing. Regulators are asking for all companies selling guaranteed equity bonds to provide literature so that it can be checked. They will be keeping a particularly keen eye out for companies promising a gross rate of return on these investments, which promise a share in the growth of the FT-SE 100 and, at the very least, guarantee the original investment.

It is not difficult to see why companies gloss over unwelcome realities such as taxation. A promise of 133 per cent gross of the FT-SE 100 index's growth does, after all, sound

a lot more tempting than 100 per cent. Unfortunately for investors in the majority of these bonds, any growth will already have been taxed within the fund, so any return will be net. Higher rate taxpayers may find they have even more tax to pay.

Challenged with this, companies say feebly: "Everyone else was quoting a gross rate," or "A gross rate was the only thing we could guarantee." The subtlety to this is: "We're not that interested in what we tell people, we just want to sell a lot."

Financial institutions are taking advantage of investors who have been buffeted by a succession of upsets, from the collapse of the equity markets in 1987 to sharp falls in interest rates over the past year. Anything with the word "guaranteed" in it attracts them.

Lauro should stamp on this as hard as it stamped on misleading marketing of with-profits bonds last year. It should also consider banning the word "guarantee" from marketing literature. As we have said before, guarantees are only as good as the person giving them.

Revenue to compensate taxpayers for its errors

A new watchdog will enforce three codes of practice governing the taxman, reports Sara McConnell

FIGHTING the Revenue used to be one of life's missions impossible. But from May, for the first time, taxpayers who feel they cannot get anyone to listen, or to deal with their affairs promptly, will be able to call on the independent Revenue Adjudicator, who will examine taxpayers' complaints.

Part of the adjudicator's task will be to make sure the Revenue is keeping to the standards set out in three codes of practice, published this week. These indicate the extent of compensation taxpayers could be entitled to from their taxman if delays or mistakes turn out to be the Revenue's fault.

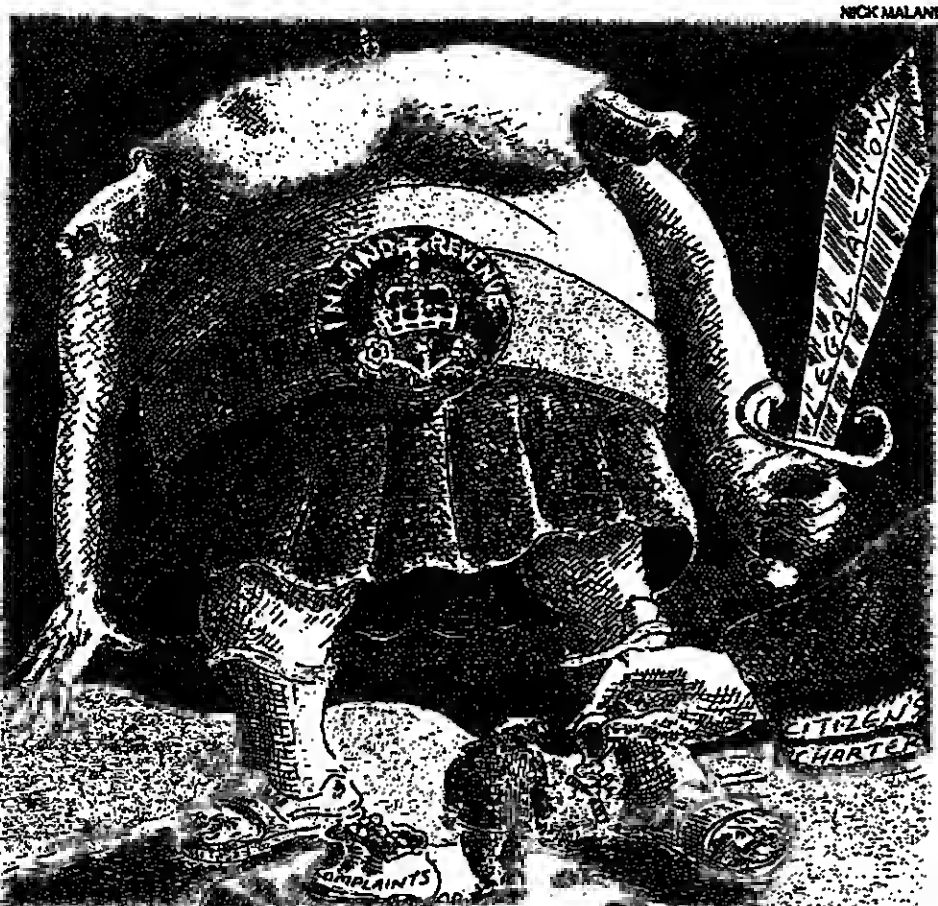
This is the first time existing and new practice has been gathered together in a single set of leaflets outlining the standards the Revenue sets itself. It is also the first time the Revenue has specified publicly that taxpayers may be able to claim compensation for extra costs incurred because of delays, or serious or persistent mistakes.

The very name of one of these leaflets, *Mistakes by the Inland Revenue*, may indicate a new humility on the part of the Revenue, which used to be reluctant to concede that it was possible for it to make a mistake. Now it seems it is not only possible for it to make mistakes, but eager to learn from them.

Simon Norris, the Inland Revenue's assistant director, business profits division, said: "It is up to anyone to complain to the management. The Inland Revenue wants to learn from complaints and find out if its systems are not working properly."

The moves are part of the government's Citizens' Charter initiative to make public services more responsive to the people who have to deal with them. One of the main objectives of the charter is to get organisations to set out in writing what people should expect and the Revenue has already gone some way towards doing this with its Taxpayers' Charter, launched in 1991.

The government conceded disappointedly this week that all public bodies needed to go further after research had shown a high level of ignorance among members of the



public about the Citizens' Charter. The research also revealed a strongly held conviction that it was not worth complaining, although there were plenty of things to complain about.

The Revenue's acknowledgement that mistakes happen and attempts to make the complaints procedure easier to understand, could open the floodgates as people vent their frustrations.

Accountants said the Revenue's codes of practice could be a significant step forward and gave them a cautious welcome.

They agreed it would give individual taxpayers dealing with the Revenue without the help of accountants much more redress. However, much depends on how the provisions of the code are interpreted, they say. There is little detail and no scale or other indication of the amounts of compensation people might expect, for example.

The Revenue admits that the codes are not too tightly drawn because it wants room to manoeuvre, depending on the circumstances of each case.

Martin Dunn, senior tax manager at Blick Rothenberg, the firm of chartered accountants, said that, at the moment, the Revenue paid taxpayers' costs only in "excep-

tional cases", even when it was itself at fault. "They are not very keen. You have to have a very good case." This may now change. The Revenue promises: "Even with errors that are not serious, we may pay the costs that result directly from our mistakes in dealing with our own tax affairs. We will do this where we continued with the mistake even after it had been pointed out, unless there was a genuine difference of opinion between us; we kept making the same type of mistake. For instance, if we had to issue an assessment three times before we got it right, even though the facts remained the same, we made a lot of unconnected mistakes within the same year or in connection with the same period of assessment. For instance, if we kept having to amend an assessment because of new facts but each time we got an amendment wrong."

This list will be depressingly familiar to many people, said Moira Elms, group manager of personal finance at Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte. "Persistent errors happen a lot. It is quite common for them to send two or three wrong assessments. These are often done at a junior level by someone with a big allocation of work who just wants to push

it through." Ms Elms added that the Revenue had given itself a "tall order" if it was really prepared to consider paying professional fees to people on the receiving end of persistent errors. "It may find itself swamped," she said.

Costs could include professional fees, reimbursement of lost wages and expenses and in some cases postage and telephone charges. The Revenue categorically says these will be paid if it makes a "serious mistake", for instance "taking a wholly unreasonable view of the law".

Less categorical is a section dealing with the interest taxpayers may be able to claim if they have paid too much tax. Ian Luder, partner at Arthur Andersen, said the Revenue had moved some way towards treating taxpayers more fairly. If the taxpayer delays for seven months "for no good reason", he will pay interest on any money owed to the taxpayer during the period of the delay. At present, taxpayers do not get interest until the end of the following tax year, although the Revenue can charge interest on outstanding tax bills from the day they fell due.

Mr Luder pointed out, however, that the leaflet did not define delay. Taxpayers could find they do not qualify for an interest repayment simply because correspondence with the Revenue has taken a long time. If each letter has been replied to within a 28-day deadline, it appears that taxpayers will not receive interest.

The admission that mistakes occur could open the floodgates as people vent their frustrations

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Other sources of complaint are "bailson" or breakdown of communication between tax offices, and "top sheeting", when a tax officer picks up only the first sheet of a letter and does not notice the rest.

Taking the official route becomes a less taxing ordeal

records were meticulous. Most taxpayers fall far short of this standard. They struggle to send back their tax returns within six months, let alone the 30 days they are given.

Part of the reduction in the lecturer's bill was to compensate for his efforts and possibly his honesty. On at least one occasion, he pointed out he had been undercharged. He also had to wait a long time for replies to some of his letters.

Last year, we reported on a man who had to write 15 letters and spend £268 on accountancy fees to persuade the Inland Revenue to refund overpaid tax. But the Revenue refused to make an *ex gratia* payment under the guidelines issued in 1975.

One client of Blick Rothenberg, chartered accountants, who had been on the receiving end of a series of clerical errors for six months last year, was firmly refused compensation for the extra costs and time involved while the mistakes were being sorted out.

The customer services manager at the local tax office said

the case was not exceptional enough.

It has been easier to stop charges being levied. One taxpayer who received a tax bill for interest earned on his savings rather late, soon afterwards received a bill for the following year rather early. It was for exactly the same amount. He paid the second one, without realising there were two bills, and when the demands for the first one continued to arrive, ignored them until threatened with legal action. He then proved his cheque had cleared and a few months later started receiving more demands for the same amount, which, again, were ignored until they became sufficiently threatening.

At this point, it became clear what the misunderstanding was and a second cheque was dispatched. Not satisfied with payment, the Revenue pursued him for interest. He refused to pay and his accountant took up the point with his tax inspector, who was unsympathetic until the confusion became clear. The interest claim was dropped but no

payment for his accountant's time was made.

Where a mistake is the result of Revenue error when the correct information was supplied in full and on time it is possible if it is not discovered for a year or more for the taxpayer to avoid paying all or a proportion of the tax bill.

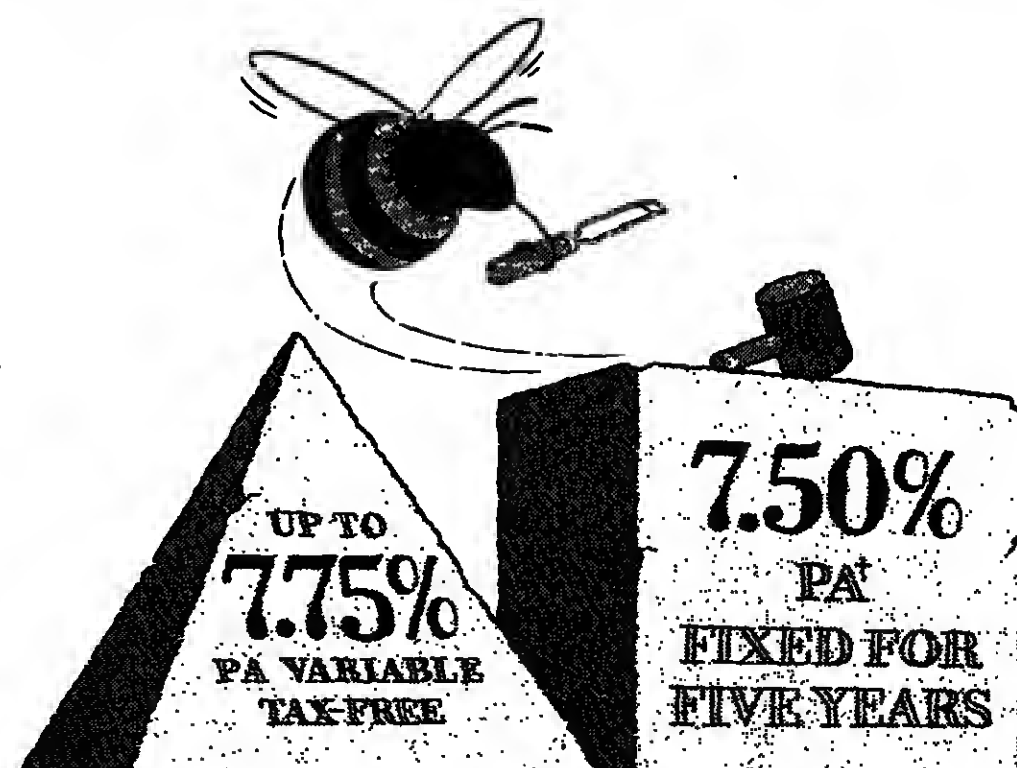
If the taxpayer has a relatively low income and the unexpected tax bill would cause hardship, the Revenue has the power to cancel the debt. However, few cases are clear cut. Often there are misunderstandings on both sides that contribute to the wrong amount being paid.

Large numbers of savers continue to have tax deducted from their bank and building society interest although they are non-taxpayers. The Revenue has spent millions of pounds trying to get the message across to them that they can receive interest gross or can claim a refund after the interest is received.

Those who make claims are pleasantly surprised how quickly they are dealt with, although if the tax involved is less than £50 a year, they have to wait until April 6 to make the claim.

Recently plaudits have outnumbered complaints about the Revenue. Readers have received tax refunds quickly and efficiently and for the right amount, and are still pinching themselves.

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Tax referee faces heavy workload

THE independent adjudicator, appointed to consider taxpayers' complaints occurring after April 5, is expected to handle between 20 and 60 complaints a month when he starts work in May. If this Revenue assumption proves correct, his tax workload could be seven times that of the government's ombudsman, who received 100 complaints from taxpayers last year. It is likely to increase as the scheme receives more publicity (Sara McConnell writes).

The Revenue said this week that of the 15,000 complaints received last year, the most were dealt with through the tax office. Under the proposals published this week, taxpayers who are not satisfied with their tax office's response could turn to the adjudicator. However, they can only do this after the complaint has been through the controller of the relevant executive office or the chief executive of the valuation office agency. This process

is similar to that operated by other independent ombudsmen but Barry Glassberg, the Revenue's assistant director, central division, said the scheme would be less formal. There would be no need for the controller or chief executive to issue a letter saying they have reached deadlock with a complaint, as is necessary with the insurance or banking ombudsman, for example.

The adjudicator will consider complaints about the way a tax office has handled someone's affairs. He will deal with problems involving "excessive delays, errors, discourtesy or the way in which the Revenue has exercised discretion". He will not be able to handle questions of tax law or the amount of tax liability because these are already dealt with by the tax commissioners if necessary. He will also not be able to handle rating questions, which are dealt with by the Valuation tribunal. The Revenue

admitted this could create difficult grey areas when tax complaints overlapped into areas beyond the adjudicator's terms of reference.

The biggest single source of complaint, according to the Revenue, are technical errors, where the amount of tax owed is wrongly calculated, and delays in sorting out tax affairs. These two accounted for 40 per cent of all the complaint calls made to tax offices in the past month. Some complaints would be within the ombudsman's terms of reference. The next biggest single source of complaint - "Why do I have to pay tax at all?" - certainly would not be, although it was raised by 18 per cent of callers.

Other sources of complaint are "bailson" or breakdown of communication between tax offices, and "top sheeting", when a tax officer picks up only the first sheet of a letter and does not notice the rest.

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Legal action taken over ICS payouts

By Sara McConnell

SOLICITORS representing up to 700 home income plan investors will next week ask the High Court to decide whether people who took out plans before the Investors Compensation Scheme started on August 28, 1988, are still eligible for compensation.

An application for judicial review of ICS's rules on who is eligible for compensation will be lodged early next week by Barnett Sampson, a firm of London solicitors. Any ruling on interpretations of ICS rules will apply to all investors, not only those with home income plans, although these should be among the first to benefit.

A decision that those investing or taking advice before August 1988 would be covered if they were still being given advice after that date could open the way to many more eligible claimants.

Richard Barnett, a partner in the firm, said people who

had been advised to take out home income plans before the ICS started should still be able to claim compensation because advisers selling the plans were in breach of duty by not reviewing their advice and remedying it. Salesmen were under a continuing obligation to give good advice, Mr Barnett said.

Thousands of elderly investors were encouraged in the late eighties to mortgage their homes and put the lump sum released into an investment bond run by an insurance company or, in some cases, the adviser. In theory, income from the bond would cover mortgage payments with money left over. But the value of the bonds fell. At the same time, rising interest rates and falling property prices have left many struggling to make the mortgage payments still due every month.

Mr Barnett said there was a "whole group of people"



Waiting on the ICS: Vera and Bert Hawkins, who took out a home income plan in 1987

whose dealings with home income plan advisers had occurred just before or had straddled the August 28 cut-off date. One client had been advised to take out a plan in late August, but had not completed on her mortgage until September 2. Under the present interpretation of ICS rules, she would not be eligible for compensation.

The ICS argues that people

can only be compensated for negligent advice given after the scheme started. However, it indicated that it was keen to find out if there were investors who had received more bad advice after the scheme had started and could be compensated on these grounds. For example, the home income plan salesman could have repeated his recommendation to go into the plan after August 28.

The ICS is in the process of interviewing investors on their circumstances but it does not have a deadline for completing interviews. It said: "We will have to let the judicial review go ahead. We are anxious for investors to give us information. We want to compensate but we want to make sure it is within the rules of the scheme."

Vera and Bert Hawkins, of Hayes in Kent, were among those interviewed by the ICS this week. They took out a home income plan in July 1987, through Aylesbury Associates using a loan from the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society but continued to receive advice from Aylesbury Associates that the plan was suitable until 1991, when they cashed in their investment to redeem some of the mortgage. The couple, now in their seventies, were advised to take out a loan of £50,000 on their home, then valued at £115,000, and invest £30,000 of the money in an investment bond. The remaining £20,000 went into shares. Mrs Hawkins said: "We

only went into it after a lot of consideration. We thought it was going to be fine." But they discovered in March 1991 that the value of their £50,000 had fallen to only £14,900, or £13,500 after charges. Mrs Hawkins said the ICS had been "very fair and helpful" but she was "anxiously awaiting" a decision on whether plans taken out before August 1988 would be covered.

Investors won another important battle this week when the High Court ruled that widows and widowers of those already claiming or considering a claim against the compensation scheme could continue the claim of a dead spouse.

The ICS has also conceded that many people were struggling financially while awaiting compensation because they were still having to pay mortgage interest. It had previously ruled that it would not cover losses suffered by investors paying mortgages after the "quantification date", the date up to which compensation is assessed. Now it says it will pay interest on the sum it considers to be eligible for compensation from the quantification date until the payment date, one month after the date on which an offer was made to an investor.

Mr Barnett said this could add £2,000 to £3,000 to the compensation. The payout will not apply to investors with mortgages from the Cheltenham & Gloucester. It has been waiving their mortgage interest since March 1992.

Fidelity wins top Moody's rating

By Lindsay Cook
MONEY EDITOR

FIDELITY Investments has won a triple A rating for its cash unit trust and its money funds, which are based in Bermuda, from Moody's, the international rating agency. The rating is the highest possible and is equivalent to that awarded to government securities.

The authorised unit trust, with £114 million invested, has a higher rating than the Halifax, the largest building society, on its long-term paper. It is rated by Moody's as AA1. This is higher than the high street banks.

Fidelity decided to seek the rating for its cash products because it thought this would give extra comfort to savers planning to put money into these funds. To win the rating, the investment house had to give full details of the fund's background and organisation, the background and qualification of the fund manager, the credit quality of the fund's assets, the operational procedures and controls, and the monitoring system.

The fund invests solely in term deposits with banks and is usually split between at least eight banks, chosen on the basis of their creditworthiness. It yields 6 per cent gross. The minimum investment is £1,000 and investors who put in more than £5,000 can have a cheque book on their account.

Fidelity manages more than \$200 billion, of which over \$70 billion is in money market funds. Cash unit trusts have gained in popularity in the past two years as building society and bank accounts have reduced their rates. In addition, investors are more wary about putting their money into the best account in the market only to find weeks or months later that it is no longer competitive and that their money cannot be withdrawn until the period of notice is completed.

The unit trusts operate in a similar way to building society postal accounts. The one drawback is that non-taxpayers cannot receive their interest gross. They have to apply for a refund of the tax paid on their income.

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* Not available p.a. on £100,000 or more = 6.41%; £50,000 - £99,999 = 6.22%; £25,000 - £49,999 = 6.04%; £10,000 - £24,999 = 5.86%. Current gross monthly rates available on C&G Best 90 are: £100,000 or more = 8.23%; £50,000 - £99,999 = 8.00%; £25,000 - £49,999 = 7.77%; £10,000 - £24,999 = 7.30%. Rates are variable. We can pay interest gross to non-taxpayers who are ordinarily resident in the UK for tax purposes subject to the relevant conditions. Otherwise income tax is deducted at the basic rate, currently 25%. Where the sum deducted is more than your tax liability (if any) you can apply to the Inland Revenue for a tax refund. Additions can be made to the account at any time subject to a minimum of £1,000. All withdrawals and the administration of the account are carried out by the Society's C&G By Post service. Withdrawals can be made by cheque or by transfer of funds to another C&G account. The minimum permitted withdrawal (excluding transfer of funds) is £1,000. Withdrawals of less than £1,000 will be rounded up to £1,000. The review date will be the 28th day of the month. For the whole of the calendar month following each review date the Society will pay interest rates which are higher than those reserved for our comparable accounts. Comparable accounts will be accounts which offer both a 90-day interest penalty and penalty-free access subject to 90 days' notice. It, however, a bonus or extra interest is payable for additional withdrawals on access, the bonus or extra interest element is included from the guarantee. Comparable accounts must be open to new investors throughout the UK, and have terms and conditions which are no more restrictive as to the number or nature of potential investors than those which apply to C&G Best 90 Account. The interest rates reserved will be variable interest rates payable for investments of exactly £10,000, £25,000, £50,000 and £100,000 in the comparable accounts. Changes in the interest rates paid on comparable accounts will be accounted for at the next review date. Resulting changes to the Society's interest rates will not be backdated but will be effective from the 1st day of the next calendar month. * Halifax, Nationwide, Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich, Leeds (C&G), Bradford & Bingley, National & Provincial, Prudential, Bristol & West, C&G is authorised by the Building Societies Commission. The Society's assets exceed £2,000 million.

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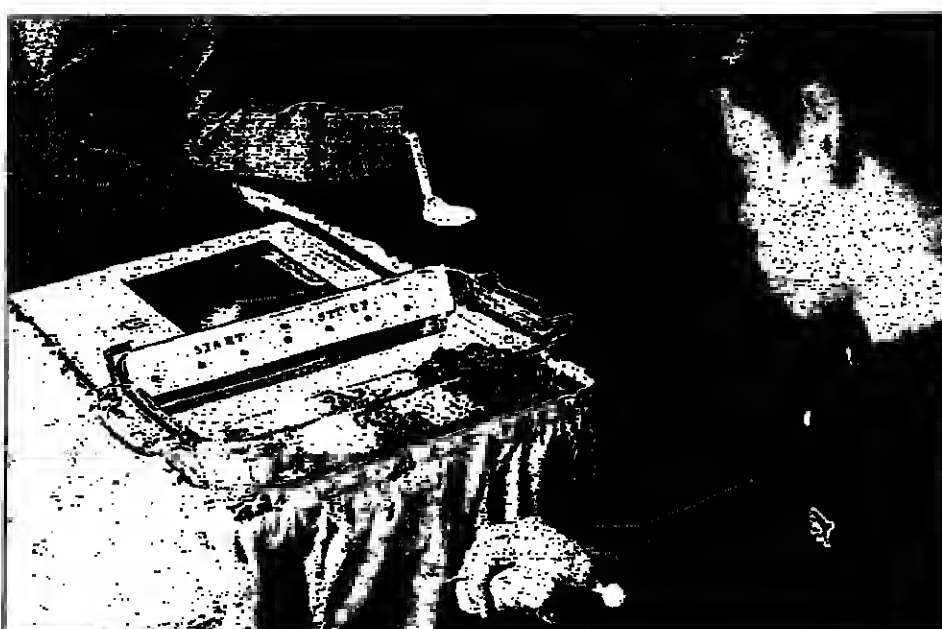
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Charities fall victim to profits squeeze



Helping handicapped: robotic arms are among the projects receiving funds but needing more

Pep offers ethical option

ALLCHURCHES Investment Management Services, the investment arm of Ecclesiastical Insurance, is offering tax-free investment in an ethical fund through a personal equity plan launched this week (Sara McConnell writes). Up to £6,000 can be invested in the Amity Fund, an ethical fund that invests in companies "making a positive contribution to the quality of individual and community life and protecting the environment". Companies involved in pollution control, waste management, energy conservation, housing, education, home safety and health care could be included. Those with interests in repressive regimes, alcohol, tobacco, gambling and armaments will be avoided.

Alternatively, investors can opt for the income builder fund, which invests mainly in UK equities with some convertibles and fixed-interest stocks, and aims to produce an above-average income and long-term capital growth. The £6,000 maximum Pep allowance can be divided between the funds, but at least £2,000 must be invested in each.

COMPANY donations to charity fell 1.5 per cent last year, according to the Charities Aid Foundation. The downward trend is expected to be much steeper this year as the squeeze on profits intensifies.

A CAF research project, on which field work finishes this week, is expected to show that while donations from companies, local authorities and the government decline, charities are being asked to do more, especially in areas such as children's needs, employment and health, which previously qualified for state aid.

Pearl Assurance has decided to change the way it gives to charity in an effort to improve efficiency. The total sum involved is £350,000, more than 0.5 per cent of Pearl's pre-tax profits last year. The new policy will not, initially at least, involve any more money than Pearl normally gives to charity. Ken McKay, head of public relations, admitted it merely meant a more effective use of funds.

Instead of handing out a few thousand pounds to a large number of charities, Pearl has selected six medical-based projects, which will each receive between £60,000 and £75,000. Mr McKay said: "The charities told us that the money we have been giving, although obviously

By Liz Dolan

welcome, was usually only enough to, for instance, pay phone bills for a couple of months. We decided it would be more useful to make a really valuable contribution to fewer organisations."

The six were chosen from a potential 67 projects. "We're backing the ones that we think have the best chance of succeeding," Mr McKay said. "It was fun choosing the winners: not so good rejecting the losers, but we had to be tough. We're not a bottomless pit."

Allied Dunbar gave £2.4 million last year, representing 1.25 per cent of pre-tax profits, plus various sums donated by staff. Salaried employees and the self-employed sales force are encouraged to undertake fundraising activities, and some also covenant donations from their monthly income.

Allied Dunbar's policy dates back to 1971, when the company was established. It relates to a decision by the company's founders, rather than any particular initiative by employees. In the case of companies like Pearl, much of the impetus comes from staff, who have to convince the board of the importance of an organisation's role in the community.

Mr McKay said: "At the moment, I feel like a one-winged angel - flying low, but aiming higher for the

future." He said he has asked several times why Pearl has yet to set up a payroll-giving scheme similar to Allied Dunbar's and has been told it would be impractical.

Pearl's £350,000 donation will be divided between the British Diabetic Association, which will receive £60,000 to fund a three-year project to develop better techniques for transplanting human insulin cells, thus freeing diabetics from the need for injections.

The British Lung Foundation will receive £75,000 to investigate the causes of occupational lung disease, which affects one in ten people in the UK.

The Phoenix Appeal, set up after the King's Cross tube station fire, is given £60,000 for work on scars from burns and scalds.

A further £60,000 will be used by Staffordshire University to develop a robotic arm for handicapped people, and a similar sum will help the Multiple Sclerosis Society buy special equipment for use in care centres.

Aspire, a charity for people with spinal injuries, will receive £40,000 to fund the development of a special gadget that will allow quadriplegics to use their tongues to operate computers, wheelchairs and other vital pieces of equipment.

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The Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society's Best 90 account is guaranteeing to pay the highest 90-day rate each month of any top ten building society until at least May 1994. On the 28th of every month, interest rates on the 90-day notice accounts of the top ten building society accounts and the Abbey National will be reviewed and the Best 90 rates adjusted accordingly. The account pays 5.66 per cent net, 7.55 per cent gross, on the minimum balance of £10,000 and up to 8.55 per cent gross, 6.41 per cent net, on balances of £100,000 or more.

□ Bank of Scotland's new rate on its Classic Visa card and Bank MasterCard is 1.63 per cent, an APR of 22.6 per cent for purchases and 24.5 per cent for cash advances. The annual fee is £10.

□ Rates have fallen on Abbey National's 90-day investment account and Tessa by about 0.8 per cent. The highest rate on the investment account is now 4.88 per cent net, 6.5 per cent gross, on balances of £25,000 and more. The bank has raised rates on balances of more than £25,000 in the high yield bond by between 0.45 and 1.15 per cent gross.

□ Citibank Mortgage will offer customers with mortgages worth more than the value of their property the option of making higher repayments, thus reducing the mortgage debt. Borrowers can pay in multiples of £50, up to £500 a month.

□ National Westminster Bank is offering a three-year fixed-rate mortgage at 7.29 per cent (APR 8.2 per cent until February 28, 1995 or a five-year fixed rate at 8.29 per cent (APR 8.4 per cent) until February 28, 1997. First-time buyers will not be charged an arrangement fee but others will be charged a fee of £250.

□ Birmingham Midshires Building Society has a discounted rate of 5.49 per cent for the first nine months of the loan for borrowers who are prepared to take out mortgage payment protection insurance through the society. Others can obtain a discount of 2 per cent off the current variable rate of 7.99 per cent. Both offers can be taken as repayments, pensions or endowments.

□ Save & Prosper has cut the rate on its fee-paying Visa card from 1.59 to 1.5 per cent a month, an annual percentage rate of 21.3 per cent for purchases and 22.4 per cent for cash withdrawals. Cardholders are charged a £10 annual fee. The rate for non-fee-paying cardholders is unchanged at 1.75 per cent a month (APR 23.1 per cent purchases and 24.2 per cent cash).

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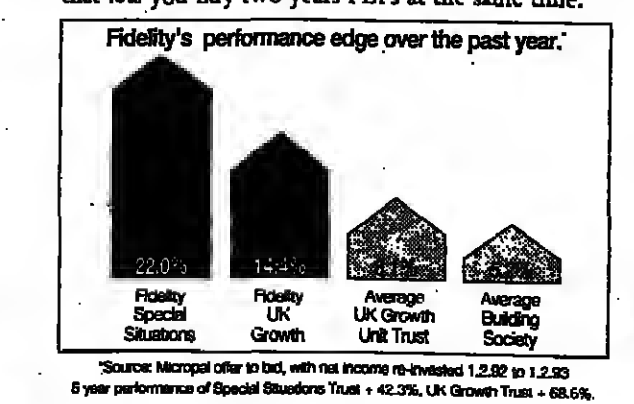


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Cost of Pep may outweigh benefits

By Lindsay Cook
MONEY EDITOR

THE cost of investing in unit trust personal equity plans has been cut by several groups in recent months, but for investors who want to choose their own shares, the costs can still outweigh the tax benefits of the plans.

Those considering selling shares that they currently hold and reinvesting the proceeds in a single-company Pep before the end of the financial year in April, are likely to benefit if they have substantial holdings of shares that they plan to shelter from capital gains tax when they finally dispose of them.

Single-company Peps have an investment limit of £3,000 a year. They became available at the beginning of last year, to increase the maximum total investment each year to £9,000.

The cost of sheltering shares from tax was brought home to one investor when he analysed the return on his Abbey National shares before and after they were put into a personal equity plan.

He started with 875 shares, which paid him a total dividend income of £86.18 after tax in 1991. In May last year, he received a further £61.25. Two weeks later, he converted the shares into a single-company Henderson Pep.

To pay the initial costs, he put only 850 shares into the plan.

The Pep's dividends are paid in January and July, so no more payouts were due in 1992. On January 22, a payment of £24.95 was received after expenses had been deducted.

The investor had taken the plan to improve his dividend payments and is dissatisfied that his income has fallen from £86.18 in year one to £61.25 in year two, and so far he has received £24.95 this year for the October payment. The gross dividend for the 850 shares was £32.30.

Personal equity plans are free of income tax on dividends and capital gains tax on any gains.

The first £5,800 of gains in any financial year is exempt from the tax that is charged at the investor's top rate of income tax. Couples both have an exemption allowance.

In cases where shares are jointly held, both allowances can be applied to one shareholding.



"Once bitten, twice shy": Elizabeth and Roger de Vere, who lost more than half of their capital in 18 months

Promising income plans can erode capital invested

By Sara McConnell

THE search for regular, guaranteed income has intensified as building societies continue to cut savers' rates. Investors are being tempted by products promising that their income will be high and guaranteed. However, they should check where this income is coming from as some policies generate income by digging into the capital investment. There could also be high charges for investments that combine several types of savings contract.

Investors taking out one such policy offering a guaranteed rate of income over five years could find themselves being paid back part of their original investment as income while eroding their capital.

The Monthly Income Plan promises high guaranteed regular payments over five years. One part of the investment goes into a personal equity plan to generate capital. The other, which is intended to generate income, is paid partly into a building society and partly into guaranteed

growth bonds. Each year, a payment from the bond tops up the money in the building society account to provide the income for the following year.

However, the quotation offered to one potential investor by New Direction Finance, the firm that designed the fund, shows that the income projected to be paid out by the

Hybrid plans are devised for people who do not have the ability to devise them themselves

capital invested. There is no growth on capital invested in the guaranteed growth bonds. The quotation says that the monthly income represents a return of 9.15 per cent a year. Guaranteed growth bonds are insurance policies. Premiums are invested in the life fund of the company offering the investment. In this case Aegon Life. Capital growth and income on such investments is taxed within the fund. This is made clear in the Monthly Income Plan brochure. However, it

does not make clear that non-taxpayers cannot reclaim tax already deducted from income payments. Investors surrendering the plan before the five years are up are not likely to get back what they put in.

The investor was sent the quotation in response to an enquiry she had made to an advertisement placed by IFG Financial Services, a Fimbra registered independent financial adviser. David McGee, the firm's compliance officer, said income paid out, to a large extent, came from the capital invested in the building society account and the guaranteed bonds. He said: "It is a package. People are getting a level of income." The firm had received several letters pointing out that the payment of income depended on eroding the capital. "It is not unusual for someone to work it out," Mr McGee said.

IFG is one of about 200 firms selling this plan. It receives commission of 3 per cent of the investment. New Direction Finance also charges an administration fee of 0.25 per cent and an extra, unspecified charge relating to the cost of gifts.

Geoff Spittles, marketing director of New Direction Finance, said that people were paying for the "skill and ability" of those who devised the plan.

He said: "Hybrid plans like this are designed specifically because most people have not got the skill or ability to design them themselves."

Investors putting their money into equity investments intended to generate high income are not told their income is guaranteed. But their capital can be severely eroded if a fund manager's investment strategy goes wrong, as Roger de Vere and his wife, Elizabeth, discovered. They lost half their capital in only 18 months. The couple invested £12,828 of their retirement savings in the Aetna Higher Income Portfolio Pep in March 1991. By September 1992, they were told the company had decided to wind up compulsorily the fund because of severe capital losses. The plan had held a spread of between eight and ten equities.

Nick Malaczynski, Aetna's marketing director, said: "We aimed to provide a high level of income but we only had a small spread of equities and it only needs one or two of them to go down. With hindsight, it was at the end of the 1980s boom."

The de Veres and other investors in the fund were told they could transfer to a unit trust-based Pep with a spread of up to 60 stocks. This would be less risky.

However, the de Veres decided they were "once bitten, twice shy" and asked for their money back. They received £6,376.92.

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FLEMINGS
The Investment Trust Experts

Taking the risk out of weddings



A day to remember: photographers are the biggest source of problems, Cornhill says

Liz Dolan reports on Cornhill's improved insurance policy, designed to guard against all eventualities on the big day

WEDDINGS are not always the rose-tinted idylls described in society magazines and Mills and Boon novels. Plenty of things can go wrong that leave organisers financially as well as socially embarrassed.

Cornhill Insurance, which has just launched an improved version of its awkwardly named Weddingsurance policy in time for the annual spring weddingfest, cites examples.

Photographers are the most fertile source of problems, apparently. They forget to load cameras, ruin films during processing or simply fail to turn up. One had a better excuse than most when his wife went into premature labour as the wedding was about to begin. Another's car was stolen and wrecked by joyriders.

Brides appear to be made of sterner stuff than their partners. Cornhill gives two examples of bridegrooms succumbing to last-minute illnesses (appendicitis and meningitis) but none involving brides.

Other claims have involved a wedding dress ruined by a small boy and his finger paints.

A growing problem in the recession is that of reception venues suddenly going bankrupt, involving the loss of large deposits and the need either to find alternative accommodation at extra cost or to cancel the whole event.

The basic Weddingsurance package costs £45: pessimists, or those planning an expensive ceremony, may choose to pay more. Marquee cost extra, as do esoteric extras such as regimental swords, but the

spokesman said the basic policy covers most eventualities.

Cancellations are insured up to £2,500. This is a 25 per cent improvement on the previous maximum, but still nowhere near the £7,000 that Cornhill says is the cost of the average wedding. However, this includes honeymoons, which do not figure in the Weddingsurance package.

Cancellation must be for unforeseen catastrophes, such as death, injury, illness or unemployment of the bride, groom, or close relatives; the closure of the venue for ceremony or reception, or the non-appearance of transport — and not simply because the family discovers it cannot afford the wedding, a spokesman said.

The cost of retaking photographs is insured up to £1,000, as is the loss of, or damage to, the bride's and bridesmaids' dresses, hired menswear and presents. Maximum cover for accidental injury or damage to property is £1 million, although the insured have to pay the first £100 of a claim for damage to hired premises. Other claims are subject to a £25 excess.

The package includes a legal helpline, which advises on anything from the drawing up of pre-nuptial agreements to problems with hotels that renege on pre-agreed conditions.

Similar cover is now available for bar mitzvahs after an increasing number of requests over recent years.

Cornhill launched its first weddings insurance policy in 1988. Norwich Union and Methodist & General have since followed suit.

Insurance trap for jobless

NEWLY unemployed people could lose substantial sums in lost benefits, or credit insurance payouts, if they fail to register with their local employment offices as soon as possible after losing their jobs (Liz Dolan writes).

Insurers normally require anyone with redundancy cover to sign on immediately. People who have been made redundant are entitled to benefits from day one, irrespective of any redundancy cheques received, but credit insurers often wait a few months before starting monthly payments.

Many people with bank loans, or credit cards, may not even be aware that these are covered by insurance policies. They may have failed to spot application form instructions advising them to tick a box if they did not want to pay premiums. Others may have forgotten policies' existence since signing credit agreements. Such policies normally cost only a pound or two, automatically added to the monthly bill.

Mortgage borrowers will normally have made a conscious decision to take out redundancy cover.

However, even they may not be fully aware of the terms and conditions of their policies. One reader said: "It did not occur to me to register when I lost my job because, in those days, I had enough savings to live on and didn't need to claim any money from the state." He did not hurry to notify the company with which his mortgage repayments were insured because the policy required him to meet the first two months' repayments.

Too late, he discovered that the DSS would also have paid at least part of the mortgage payment not covered by his insurance policy.

Medical service hit by swindler

BY TONY HETHERINGTON

A MEDICAL helicopter service has had its wings clipped after losing more than £50,000 to a "Walter Mitty" fraudster who, its organisers claim, was given a clean bill of health by the Sun Alliance insurance company.

Swindler Philip Witcomb was introduced to Careflight, a medical helicopter service attached to the threatened St Bartholomew's Hospital, by Sun Alliance representatives in Harlow, Essex.

Captain Ian Evans, Careflight's aviation director, says he was told by Paul Trenholm, a Sun Alliance consultant, that he and his colleagues had access to investment funds that might assist the scheme.

Captain Evans met Trenholm, his Sun Alliance boss, Dominic Russell, and a senior financial consultant with the company, Dermot Eustace. It was Mr Eustace, he says, who introduced him to Philip Witcomb. When Witcomb met Careflight officials, he asked whether they would arrange private flights for him.

Dr Aubrey Bristow, Careflight's medical director, said:

"When a specific request to fly to Switzerland was received from Witcomb, we called our Sun Alliance contact, Mr Eustace. He said credit references on Mr Witcomb had been taken up by Sun Alliance as they were negotiating 'substantial business' with him, and he was indeed creditworthy."

Captain Evans agreed: "Eustace gave me a verbal assurance that banking references had been taken up on Witcomb by Sun Alliance, and he was insistent that we should extend Witcomb credit lest our 'deal' be jeopardised."

Careflight then provided Witcomb with flights costing £52,000, but Witcomb failed to pay a penny. Last week, at Guildford Crown Court, he was convicted on three charges of fraud and remanded for sentencing on March 5.

Detective Constable Mike Ashton of Essex Police said of Witcomb: "When we started checking into his background, we found out that he had been made bankrupt. He stated in court that he owns companies in Spain and he is owed a lot of money. We were assisted by

Interpol, but it was very difficult to substantiate one way or the other — except that he was definitely a bankrupt."

When it became clear that Witcomb could not pay Careflight, Dr Bristow and Captain Evans contacted Sun Alliance's head office. They were told that Mr Eustace, its senior financial consultant in Harlow, had been acting privately in his talks with Careflight, while simultaneously selling Sun Alliance products.

Dr Bristow says the company finally admitted it was doing business with Witcomb and had ordered a credit check on him. However, the results of the check were not received and had never been followed up.

A Sun Alliance spokeswoman confirmed the company's denial of responsibility for the damage to Careflight. She said: "We do not have a liability towards Dr Bristow or Careflight because the representative, Mr Eustace, was acting in a private capacity when he effected the introduction between Dr Bristow and Mr Witcomb. We believe that on

no occasion did he offer any assurance as to Mr Witcomb's ability to pay for his flights, or any assurances regarding his financial position." Sun Alliance added that it was not responsible for anything Mr Eustace might have done or said, as he was self-employed.

Mr Eustace himself agreed he did know Mr Witcomb. But, "I don't any more, I am afraid," he said. Told that Careflight was co-operating in the preparation of this article, Mr Eustace said: "Number one, I would prefer my name did not appear. And number two, I want to definitely make sure, hopefully, that the company's name does not appear."

Despite the harm done by Witcomb to a medical service operating on a tight budget, Careflight is still very much in business. Nevertheless, the damage done has been very real. Dr Bristow says: "I would state publicly that this debt will prevent us expanding the service, and will restrict us so that we cannot move all the patients we are asked to move. Patients will suffer and may die as a result."

Lautro to monitor misleading claims

BY SARA MCCONNELL

SOME life offices selling bonds guaranteeing money back or a proportion of stock market growth could be misleading investors by promising gross returns when these cannot be achieved.

From next month the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation (Lautro), which regulates life offices' marketing activities, will require all companies selling guaranteed-equity bonds to send their literature to the regulator. Offices whose literature is considered misleading could be asked to contact investors to check whether they understood what they were buying.

In some cases, companies could be forced to pay compensation, Lautro said. An estimated £500 million of these

bonds have been sold. They have been heavily marketed as savings rates fall and investors look for returns from other sources. The attraction for nervous investors has been that they are guaranteed their original investment back in most cases. Lump sums are put into investment bonds and growth is normally linked to growth of the FT-SE 100 index of quoted companies.

Lautro is concerned that the rate of growth quoted on some bonds is a gross rate. Income and capital gains on investments in insurance-company bonds are taxed within the fund, so any return will be net of tax. Colin Hawtin, head of policy, said: "Lautro rules say companies must explain to investors what the product is and what is guaranteed. They must not imply the

return is gross, because it is taxed within the fund." He said marketing literature should always show charges clearly and make plain whether dividends are included in the growth rate quoted.

Laurentian Life has sent in its literature already and is confident it will be approved. It quoted a return of 115 per cent gross of the FT-SE index's growth for its Capital Protected Bond, which closed on November 30 last year. The company said: "We did make abundantly clear the rate was subject to tax."

The Securities and Investments Board confirmed yesterday that it had asked the Treasury to look at how similar deposit-based bonds offered by building societies and banks should be regulated. They are not regulated by Lautro.

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Simplifying social legislation

From Dr Des Keenan

Sir, In 1908 and 1909, Lloyd George and his ally Winston Churchill brought in two of the fundamental pieces of social legislation in this country, the old age pension and the employment of workers in the coal mines.

The basic old age pension was 5 shillings a week, means tested. For some reason, employers were made to pay part of the insurance, and it remains as a pay-roll tax to this day.

Now there is a tangled forest of entitlements. From personal experience, I am convinced that half of the cost arises from correcting the administrators' own errors.

A single mistake by one department affects several others, and the correction has to be negotiated individually with each department.

Reducing and simplifying the system is essential, though reductions will be opposed bitterly.

Concessions, like employers' contributions or redundancy money become established as rights.

The following provisions should be made by the state as a safety net.

1) A basic old age pension equivalent to 5 shillings a week for all with no means test and no work test.

2) The equivalent sum as social security for all the unemployed, men, and women, and children with means and availability for work tests where appropriate.

3) A comprehensive public health service providing essential medical care.

4) Every old age pensioner should have free phone.

These should be paid out of general taxation, for the present national insurance contributions are merely disguised taxes.

For the rest, the government should encourage employers' or mutual benefit insurance schemes for additional health care, income, etc.

These once existed but were destroyed by a socialist bias against self-help.

Both my parents had belonged to contributory pension schemes and ended up in their old age getting less than the feeble ones who had no other income.

All benefits from personal insurance plans, whether Peps or Scottish Widows should be additional to state benefits; otherwise you may lose more than you gain.

Yours faithfully,
DES KEENAN,
129 Bluebird Walk,
Chalk Hill Road,
Wembley Park,
Middlesex.

Paying the price for a pension

From Mr A. Buckingham

Sir, The government would like us to do more to provide for our own long-term future via private pension schemes.

I had thought it prudent to invest a further £20,000 in my pension scheme as it was tax efficient. Imagine my surprise when I received the confirmation of the charges. The broker would receive 42.11 per cent commission of the start payment. It's not surprising he was happy with £8,422 commission. On top of that, of course, were the start-up charges. It would appear that, out of my £20,000, my scheme would be worth £4,000 odd. I checked with the company and was told that 42.11 per cent is the standard commission within the industry.

I wonder how many of your readers understand this commission? Even more important, do they believe it is a reasonable one? I cancelled my scheme and will try to find out how to deal direct in future.

Yours faithfully,
A. BUCKINGHAM,
Managing Director,
Benham (A. Buckingham)
Ltd,
Benham House, The Bayle,
Folkestone, Kent.

Contrast in cost of insurance and banking complaints

From Mr Ramnik Shah

Sir, The policy of the Banking Ombudsman not to grant more than a token £10 costs to successful complainants (Monique Allan story, February 13) may be contrasted with the approach of the Insurance Ombudsman in my case which you reported in your editorial on January 11, 1992.

There, it may be recalled, what had happened was that I had to engage in lengthy correspondence with the Norwich Union before the defective documentation relating to a pension plan policy issued by

them was sorted out. They, however, refused payment of a mere £50 which I had sought by way of costs initially and which I later increased to £200 as the matter dragged on, on the basis that I had to use my professional time and resources as a solicitor in dealing with it (or alternatively that a lay person might have had to

employ a professional to do so). In the end, the Insurance Ombudsman awarded the latter sum!

Yours faithfully,
RAMNIK SHAH,
118 Seaford Gardens,
Stoneleigh,
Epsom,
Surrey.

Relative question of paying tax

From Mrs H.W. Aldred

Sir, In the light of your item in *The Times* (February 13) — "Careless taxpayers give government £8 billion bonus a year" — I have been wondering what to do with my mother's income tax. She is 93 and now incapable of signing her name. She lives in a nursing home and I deal with her finances.

The nursing home fees are paid with two pensions, attendance allowance, and the income from building society interest, topping up with capital from time to time.

In the year ending April 5, 1993, with the interest and capital diminishing, she will probably be entitled to increased age allowance, and no longer taxable at 25 per cent.

My problem is that some years ago we organised her building society investments into joint accounts so that I could withdraw as necessary on her behalf.

Last year, I noticed that some of the accounts could be transferred to accounts paying higher interest. When I set about doing this I was told that my mother's signature would be required to open the new account.

I told the building society that she was no longer capable of signing, and they suggested I closed the joint account and opened a new one in my sole name. This I did and continued to use the income solely for her nursing home fees.

If I attempt to get an income tax refund for her, shall I find myself in difficulties since the accounts are ostensibly in my name? I do also have building society accounts of my own, for which, this year, I obtained income tax repayment as a married woman.

I did not declare my mother's accounts (in my name) as I do not regard them as belonging to me.

Yours faithfully,
H.W. ALDRED,
26 Neston Drive,
Chester,
Cheshire.

Letters are welcomed, but *The Times* regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

Charity begins at home

From Mr David L. Underwood

Sir, I was interested to read Lindsay Cook's comments on the government's Give As You Earn scheme in *Weekend Money* Comment (February 13).

When I was employed in the civil service I contributed to Save the Children from the inception of the scheme.

It was my wish to continue to contribute when I became a civil service pensioner. However, my wishes were thwarted by the fact that the Paymaster General's Office (the pension-paying authority) did not operate the scheme due to the costs involved.

Perhaps the government's attempts to encourage the use of the scheme should start within its own organisation?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID L. UNDERWOOD,
49 Downlands Close,
Salisbury,
Wiltshire.

Give As You Earn... yes, very laudable but would you mind not bothering us with it?



Barclaycard's 19 pence of stupidity

From K. Bibby

Sir, I was most interested in the letter from Leon Price (February 6) and the waiving of interest charges on Barclaycard resulting from late payment. My experience is of Barclaycard being too quick to the point of stupidity. My December statement credited only one charge — credit card sentinel at £8, to reach Barclaycard by 4 Janu-

ary. Unfortunately, this had got overlooked until December 31; as there would be no postal collection and no banking the following day, I decided the best option would be to pay in at Barclays Bank on Saturday January 2, and this was duly done.

The next statement dated January 12 indicated payment received on January 6 — interest at 1.79 per cent per month + 0.19p. Minimum payment to reach Barclaycard by February 8, 0.19p. The cost of postage and the envelope would cost 19p; if it had not been that Barclaycard were technically correct, albeit if somewhat stupid — they specify to allow four days if paid via bank, or seven days by post — the card would have been returned in two pieces. As it was, payment of 0.19p was made at the bank on January 27.

Yours faithfully,
K. BIBBY,
"Tauranga",
Luther Lane,
Merthyr Tydfil.

Pep that provided few happy returns

From C. R. Crockett

Sir, In December 1987, I paid £2,400 into a Prudential Holborn personal equity plan. On termination, on February 11 this year, I received £3,615.

This represents a return of about 8 per cent compound interest, which would appear

reasonable were it not for the fact that the share market in which the money was invested was at its lowest in December 1987 and is at its highest in February 1993.

The plan was scrupulously managed, and I was sent detailed quarterly reports on its progress. But the total income, including tax credits recovered, amounted to £568.66, while management fees, including VAT, totalled £498, and it is hard to see how any such plan can substantially benefit investors.

The Pru is more generous to its shareholders. £2,400 would have bought around 1,500 shares in December 1987 (allowing for the subsequent subdivision), and they would now be worth over £4,500. They would also have paid net dividends totalling (over the five years) £706. I have not tried to work out how much more would have accrued if the dividends had been accumulated.

Yours faithfully,
C.R. CROCKETT,
19 The Avenue,
Dallington, Northampton.

LOW INTEREST RATES AREN'T HELPING SYLVIA

The recent substantial cuts in interest rates are not good news for everyone.

Take Sylvia. With her state pension and the interest from her small savings, she thought she was secure. In the last few months she has seen her income drop and her unpaid bills mount. At 77 she has lost her financial independence, as she can no longer afford to pay her own way.

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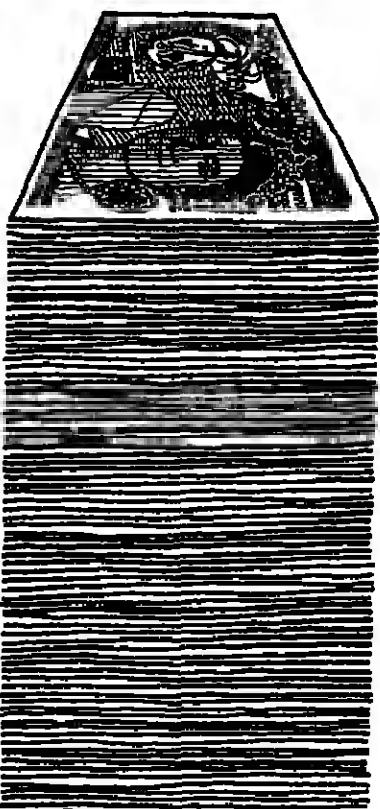
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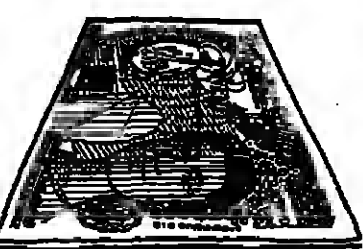
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Exchange index compared with 1985 was up at 77.4
(day's range 77.0-77.4).

Australia dollar	1.4390-1.4373	Australia	1.4322-1.4332
Bahrain dinar	2.1187-2.1918	Austria	11.47-11.49
Brazil cruzeiro*	0.541-0.553	Belgium (Com)	33.55-33.59
Brazil cruzeiro*	27853.1-27874.7	Canada	1.2964-1.2569
Cyprus pound	0.705-0.715	Denmark	6.26-6.27
Finland markka	8.4495-8.5635	France	5.520-5.525
Greece drachma	315.5-322.5	Germany	1.4050-1.4315

customers	Hong Kong dollar	1,280-11,290	Hong Kong	7,735-7,735
higher.	Indie rupee	43, 19-44	Ireland	1,488-1,491
	Kuwaiti dinar	0.4405-0.4505	Italy	155.10-155.30
	Malaysia ringgit	3.327-3.8369	Japan	19.00-19.05
	Mexico peso	4.45-4.5	Malaysia	2,627-2,628
+0.35	New Zealand dollar	2,821.3-2,829.8	Netherlands	1,834-1,836
+0.35	Saudi Arabia riyal	2.228		

+0.35	Singapore dollar	2.397-2.405	Norway	6.846-6.95
+0.20	S Africa rand (fin)	5.615-5.644	Portugal	149.1-149.5
-0.35	S Africa rand (com)	4.5585-4.564	Singapore	1.643-1.644
	U A E dirham	5.268-5.392	Spain	116.6-117.1
	Barclays Bank GTS • Lloyds Bank		Sweden	7.575-7.585
			Switzerland	1.502-1.503

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance Hse 7,
Discount Market Loans: Overnight high;
Treasury Bills (100-200): 2 mth 5 1/4; 3 mth 5; Sell: 2 mth 5; 3 mth 5 1/4;
Week fixed: 5 1/4

	1 moth	2 moth	3 moth	6 moth	12 moth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Sterling Money Rates:	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$
Interbank:	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -6 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$
Overnight open 5 $\frac{1}{2}$, close 7 $\frac{1}{2}$.					

10:10298	Loft Anthony Deps	6%	n/a	6%	5%	5%
	Sec'd CDE	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6	5%-5%	5%-5%
	Dollar CDE	3.06-3.01	n/a	3.09-3.04	3.20-3.15	3.42-3.37
	Building Society CDE	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	5%-5%	5%-5%

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Vol: 393

Why Eubank can win everything but respect

By SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

CHRIS Eubank is probably the best super-middleweight in the world. He could beat Nigel Benn, the World Boxing Council champion, again, knock out Michael Nunn, the World Boxing Association title-holder, and even outsmart James Toney, who recently won the International Boxing Federation title, yet nobody outside the World Boxing Organisation has any time for him.

If Eubank cares at all about how people in boxing see him (which is most unlikely as he is only in it for the money), he can blame nobody but himself for the lack of recognition. He has not met any world-class

opponents. Two domestic rivals, Benn and Michael Watson, gave him a hard time and two of his hand-picked opponents, Sugar Boy Malinga and Tony Thornton, made him look ordinary.

Eubank takes another step tonight to devalue himself further by defending his title against Lindell Holmes, aged 35, at Olympia. Holmes has boxed only once in 19 months, against Ralph Moncreiff, aged 42, after being knocked out by Darrin Van Horn. Holmes's points win over Moncreiff, who is no more than a journeyman, earned him a No. 7 position in the rankings of the WBO. He is not ranked in the top ten by the three other world bodies.

No wonder *Boxing News* said:

"How can an old inactive fighter, taken the distance by a 42-year-old last time out, possibly be given a chance of dethroning someone like Eubank, who's in his prime at 26? This match is little better than Riddick Bowe's fiasco against Michael Dokes in New York earlier this month."

Eubank said: "My intention is to secure more points than him. If he hits me I'll retaliate. I intend to outbox him. If he steps out of line, I'll knock him out."

"Sounds good," Holmes said. He said he had taken the bout to make up money he lost in a divorce case and he would not carry on boxing beyond 1993, even if he won the title. "I want to keep my sanity," he said.

"Fighters suffer some type of damage but I'm not impaired mentally."

Billy Gutz, Holmes's manager, blamed marital problems for his defeat by Van Horn. The 19 months of inactivity was due to the fact that nobody, including Nunn and Thornton, would take on Holmes. "When Don King told Nunn, 'You're fighting Lindell Holmes', Nunn told King, 'You fight Lindell Holmes', Gutz said, 'Five years ago this kid [Eubank] and Lindell didn't belong in the same ring. Lindell has got more first-round knockouts than Eubank's got knockouts.'"

Then after a pause, Gutz said: "He's trained well, he's been training with James Toney. Only one thing bothers me. Lindell. He's got the

guns, he's got to be able to pull the trigger."

Holmes, though never quite a top-rank boxer, is technically far better than Eubank, having beaten, in his time, Buster Drayton, Murray Sutherland and Lott Mwaile. Holmes was at his best in the late 1980s when he lost a controversial world title decision to Chong-Pal Park. But he won the vacant IBF title in 1990 by outpointing Frank Tate. He defended the title twice.

Against Van Horn he fared badly. Holmes has always had a question mark over his stamina: he was knocked out by Irving Hines in three and by Dwight Davis in eight. It is possible to see Eubank stopping him by the fifth or sixth round.

ATHLETICS

Morceli offers record deal of something for nothing



David Powell, athletics correspondent, meets Noureddine Morceli, the quiet Algerian who wants to break two world indoor records in Birmingham today

IT IS not often these days that world records come for nothing, especially outside world championships or Olympic Games. Addis Abebe collected \$500,000 (£330,000) for a 10 kilometres road world best last month.

There will be \$50,000 in April for anyone setting a world's fastest time in the London Marathon and a pole vault world record by Sergey Bubka usually shifts about \$80,000 his way.

So Andy Norman, the promoter of the TSB indoor meeting in Birmingham today, may have found a bargain. "Buy one, get one free," is the offer coming from Noureddine Morceli.

Norman will pay bonus money to Morceli if he breaks the ten-year-old indoor mile world record, but for the Algerian, being the talent that he is, one record is not enough. He wants to beat the 1,500 metres mark along the way. No bonus for that one, though.

"I want to break two world records," he said. Though there have been mutterings that he is not as fit as he would have us believe, when Morceli talks world records we must pay attention. He has, after all, three to his name. In between setting indoor and outdoor records for 1,500 metres, he ran one at 1,000 metres in Birmingham last February.

"The track is very fast," he said on Thursday. Morceli (not More-chelly) often has his name mispronounced and misspelt but does it better himself. "No, as long as people know who I am," he said. Who is he then?

Morceli, 27, is one of nine children and a devout Muslim who reads the Koran daily and fasts for 30 days at Ramadan. He is softly spoken and unaffected by his success.

"I always try to be who I am and be nice to people," he said. He is the 1,500 metres world record-holder, indoors and outdoors, and world champion at both.

His 3min 28.82sec outdoor in Rieti, Italy, last September took him into territory unexplored by Cram, Ovet, Coe and Aouita. "I am the only one who has run under 3:29: it is something special," he said. He attributes his talent to Allah and offers rather less thanks to the Algerian federation.

Five years ago, he packed his bags and left for college in the United States after the federation refused his request for assistance. He had just finished second in the world junior championships.

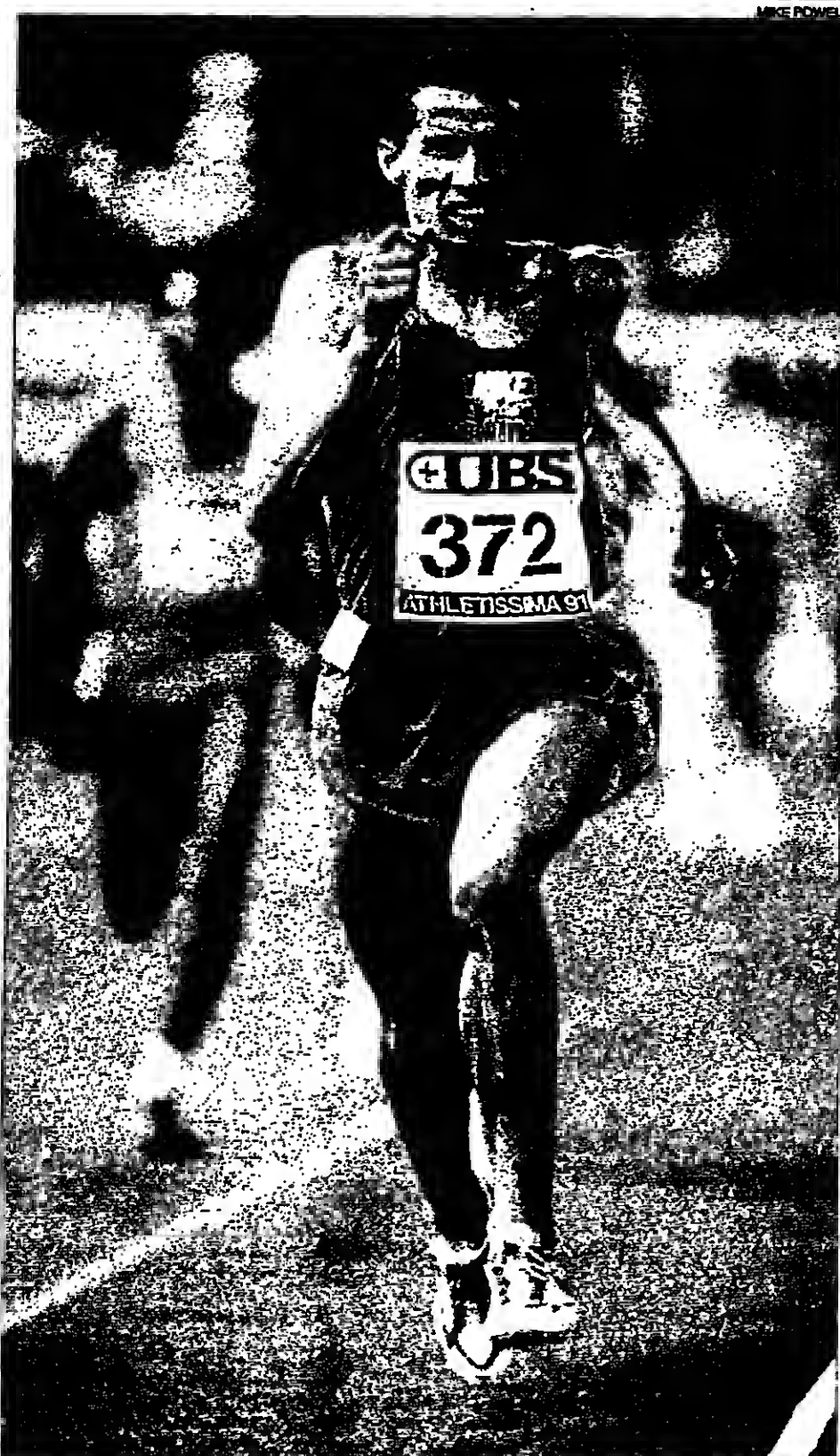
"I was so mad with the federation, so I decided to go to America for training," he said. And the relationship now that he is a great champion? "Still not good," he said.

His inspiration was his brother, Abdelhamane, who set an African 1,500 metres record in 1977 when finishing fourth in the World Cup. He should have been better. "He wasn't serious and had too much fun," Morceli said.

Now, another Morceli is coming: Ali, 20, who runs a decent 800 metres. Will he be as good as Noureddine? "I don't think so. He is kind of lazy. I am very dedicated about what I do."

Morceli's priority this year is not, he said, to retain his outdoor world title, but to break Cram's eight-year-old outdoor mile world record of 3min 46.32sec. "I should run 3:45, 3:44 very easy," he said.

Before the 1996 Olympic Games, after which, he said, he would move up to 5,000 metres, he believes he is capable of running 3:26 for 1,500 metres.



No gain without pain: Morceli shows his strength in the 1991 world championships

Unlike many others who have held the 1,500 metres or mile world record, especially Morceli, he is not setting his own training schedule. Not that he ignores good advice: he has combined the best of Coe's, Aouita's and Cram's training. "You have to be smart," he said.

The records he is chasing today are his own 3min 34.16sec (1,500 metres) and Eamonn Coghlan's 3min 49.78 (mile). When John Walker set an outdoor mile

world record of 3:49.4, he passed 1,500 in 3:34.3.

Two weeks ago, Morceli managed only 3:55.06 in New York. That said, he set his 1,500 metres outdoor world record less than a month after running 13 seconds slower for seventh place in the Olympics, for which his build-up was hampered by injury.

In Birmingham last year, Morceli was unchallenged. Today, provided he is not fooling about his fitness, he

should be far enough ahead to give us his version of Home Alone II.

But the meeting is not entirely dependent on Morceli for world-record talk. Colin Jackson, pushed by a field of the best Americans, could challenge Greg Foster's 7.36sec for the 60 metres hurdles. Merlene Ottey, after setting a 200 metres world record last weekend, wants to reclaim the 60 metres mark she has just lost to Irina Privalova at 6.92sec.

BOWLS

Nicolle moves Islands indoors

By DAVID RHYNS JONES

WHEN Mike Nicolle, of Guernsey, knocked Ian Schuback, the holder and No. 1 seed, out of the first round of the Midland Bank world indoor singles championship yesterday, he became the first Channel Islander to win a game in the event since it was first staged in 1979.

Niccole, a 100-1 outsider, started Schuback with his consistent drawing to the jack over the first four ends. That was how long it took him to win the first set 7-1, before the holder had time to settle.

Schuback, drawn unwillingly into attempting too many forceful shots, had little luck, but stuck to his task well enough to salvage the second set, scoring a three to break a 3-3 deadlock, and squaring the match with a single.

The Australian took full advantage of a lapse in Nicolle's concentration to collect another treble to lead 6-5 in the third set, and had established a good set lie when bad luck intervened.

Driving to send the jack out of bounds, Nicolle struck it, but the speeding jack hit one of his own bowls and came to rest where it gave Nicolle the two shots he needed to win the set.

Schuback won the fourth set 7-1 in 15 minutes, but Nicolle sped into a 5-2 lead in the decider and produced a magical match-winning throw that left Schuback with no option but to fire. He missed twice, by less than an inch.

"It was a lucky result," Nicolle said, but there were no complaints from the deposed champion, who said he was delighted to have been involved in such a good game.

It was the second time that the hirsute Channel Islands architect has beaten a top-ranked Australian.

In 1988 he surprised the bowling world when he defeated Kenny Williams in the world outdoor championships.

"That win helped someone else," he said, referring to the way his victory over Williams had allowed Willie Wood, of Scotland, into the final. "This one was more important because it helped me. I hope it has put Guernsey on the bowlers' map, too."

SPORT IN BRIEF

Hicks is master in youth battle

ANDY Hicks, the world No. 70, produced a completely unexpected fightback to beat Ronnie O'Sullivan, the game's best teenage snooker prospect, 5-4, in the quarter-finals of the £150,000 Hurno European Open in Antwerp yesterday (Phil Yates writes).

O'Sullivan, 17, was on course to become the youngest player to figure in the semi-finals of a world ranking tournament when he compiled breaks of 114 — in the thirty-third century of the season — 70, 33, and 42 to establish a 3-0 lead. However, O'Sullivan, the 1991 world junior champion, began to commit careless errors and, once he had a foothold, Hicks, 19 of Tavistock, woo five of the next six frames. Hicks will play Steve Lee or, more likely, Steve Davis, the six-times world champion, today for a place in the final.

Stephen Hendry, the world champion, had scraped through his quarter-final against Joe Swail on Thursday night, winning 5-4 after letting slip a 4-2 lead for Swail to draw level at 4-4. Swail went 35-20 ahead in the deciding frame before failing to pot an ambitious red. Hendry stepped in with a 73 clearance.

Fierce rivalry renewed

SQUASH: Peter Marshall, the England No. 1, having repelled a furious and physical second-round challenge from the Spaniard, Austin Adarraga, will play Chris Dittmar, of Australia, the world No. 2, in the quarter-finals of the Leekes Classic in Cardiff today. But this match is likely to be overshadowed by the one preceding it, in which Jahangir Khan, of Pakistan, and Rodney Martin, of Australia, both former world champions, renew hostilities, having clashed repeatedly two seasons ago. Martin said yesterday that he did not believe there would be any trouble, as long as Jahangir allowed him rightful passage to the ball.

Halifax face challenge

RUGBY LEAGUE: Halifax, who have scored three convincing wins and run St Helens close since Malcolm Reilly took over as coach, take on Wigan on the next two Sundays. Their meeting tomorrow can nudge Wigan ahead of St Helens in the Stages Bitter championship, while at home next week Halifax will attempt to end Wigan's Challenge Cup monopoly in their quarter-final. After losing heavily at Widnes in midweek, St Helens must Alan Hume, Gary Connolly and Sonny Nicke against Hull, playing Ricky Cowan at prop and Mike Riley on the wing.

Slalom success

SKIING: Emma Carrick-Anderson, right, won the women's slalom from Clare de Pourtales at the British national championships in Tignes, France, yesterday. Lesley Robertson's consistency gave the young Aberdeen skier the overall title and her fellow Scot, Sean Langmuir, successfully defended his 1992 slalom title. Graham Bell, whose form improved during the week, secured his first men's overall title with ninth place in the slalom.



Reading on the brink

HOCKEY: A win for Reading at Cheltenham tomorrow will secure the second division title and with it promotion to the first division of the Pizza Express national league next season. The Cheltenham forwards will have an unenviable task in attempting to break down a Reading defence that has conceded only four goals in 14 matches. Ian Jennings, who is playing for St Albans in the European indoor club championship, will fly home from Vienna in time to play against Isea in the colours of Guildford, who are disputing the second promotion place with Indian Gymkhana.

Boardman riding high

CYCLING: In the fashion of professional racing teams on the Continent, Chris Boardman, the British Olympic champion, puts his new amateur squad on parade today in his home territory of the Wirral. Under the umbrella of his original club, North Wirral Velo, Boardman has gathered half a dozen riders capable of making it Britain's dominant club on road and track this season. With sponsorship from Kodak and Reebok to be announced today, the club will also be the country's richest.

WHY DID SCOTTISH RUGBY NEED A FAST BOWLER?



Mystery still surrounds Ian Scott Smith. "The Flying Scotsman" sped to a world record number of international tries between 1924 and 1933. But why he particularly chose to give the Scottish Rugby Museum a bowler hat, as worn by early referees, no-one seems to know. A bowler. From one of Scotland's fastest caps. Whatever the reason, The Royal Bank of Scotland is happy to applaud individuality. And the ability to score numerous tries for Scotland. We are proud to be supporting the Internationals at Murrayfield once again this year.



The Royal Bank of Scotland

WHERE PEOPLE MATTER

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Registered in Scotland No. 90312.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather	Temp snow	Last
	L	U	Piste	resort	°C	fall
NORWAY						
Hafjell	35	45	good	overcast	-1C	17/2
(7/8 lifts open, 200km cross-country skiing)						
Voss	40	250	new snow	snow	0C	18/2
(All lifts open, 200km cross-country skiing)						
AUSTRIA						
Alpbach	15	70	good	worm	cloudy	-2C 17/2
(Good cover of dry snow on hard-packed base, 70% runs open)						
Schladming	15	90	good	slip	snow	0C 18/2
(Light snowfall upon slopes. Best snow north-facing runs)						
St. Anton	30	125	good	open	bright	1C 17/2
(Dry snow on firm base. All lifts, runs open)						
Zell am See	15	120	hard-packed	open	overcast	0C 17/2
(New snow above mid-station, 24/28 lifts open)						
FRANCE						
Alpe d'Huez	20	250	good	poor	bright	4C 27/1
(50% area open. Artificial snow lower runs)						
Chamonix	15	300	good	thin	bright	0C 28/1
(Some pistes closed out. Best snow upper runs)						
Les Deux Alpes	20	220	good	cloudy	sunny	5C 9/2
(Hard snow above mid-station. Some slight patches)						
Megeve	0	120	fair	closed	sunny	0C 27/1
(Pistes above 2000m groomed, 35% all area open)						
Val Thorens	80	300	hard	icy	sunny	-1C 27/1
(Spring snow south-facing slopes. All runs groomed)						
SWITZERLAND						
Aachenboden	30	80	fair	closed	cloudy	1C 17/2
(Best snow upper levels, 75% of lifts open)						
Crans Montana	5	200	fair	thin	cloudy	0C 28/1
(Spring snow all levels)						
Gstaad	5	40	good	thin	cloudy	1C 28/1
(Dry, packed snow on upper runs. Wet snow on lower runs)						
Morgins	0	25	fair	closed	sunny	3C 17/2
(Light cover now snow improving worn, upper runs)						
ITALY						
Bormio	10	150	compact	hard	sunny	0C 27/1
(Artificial snow on lower slopes, 15/17 lifts open)						
UNITED STATES						
Mammoth	240	400	good	cloudy	-1C 18/2	
(Excellent skiing at all levels on both mountains)						
Vail	140	190	new snow	snow	-5C 18/2	
(Plenty of fresh snow. All lifts/trails open)						

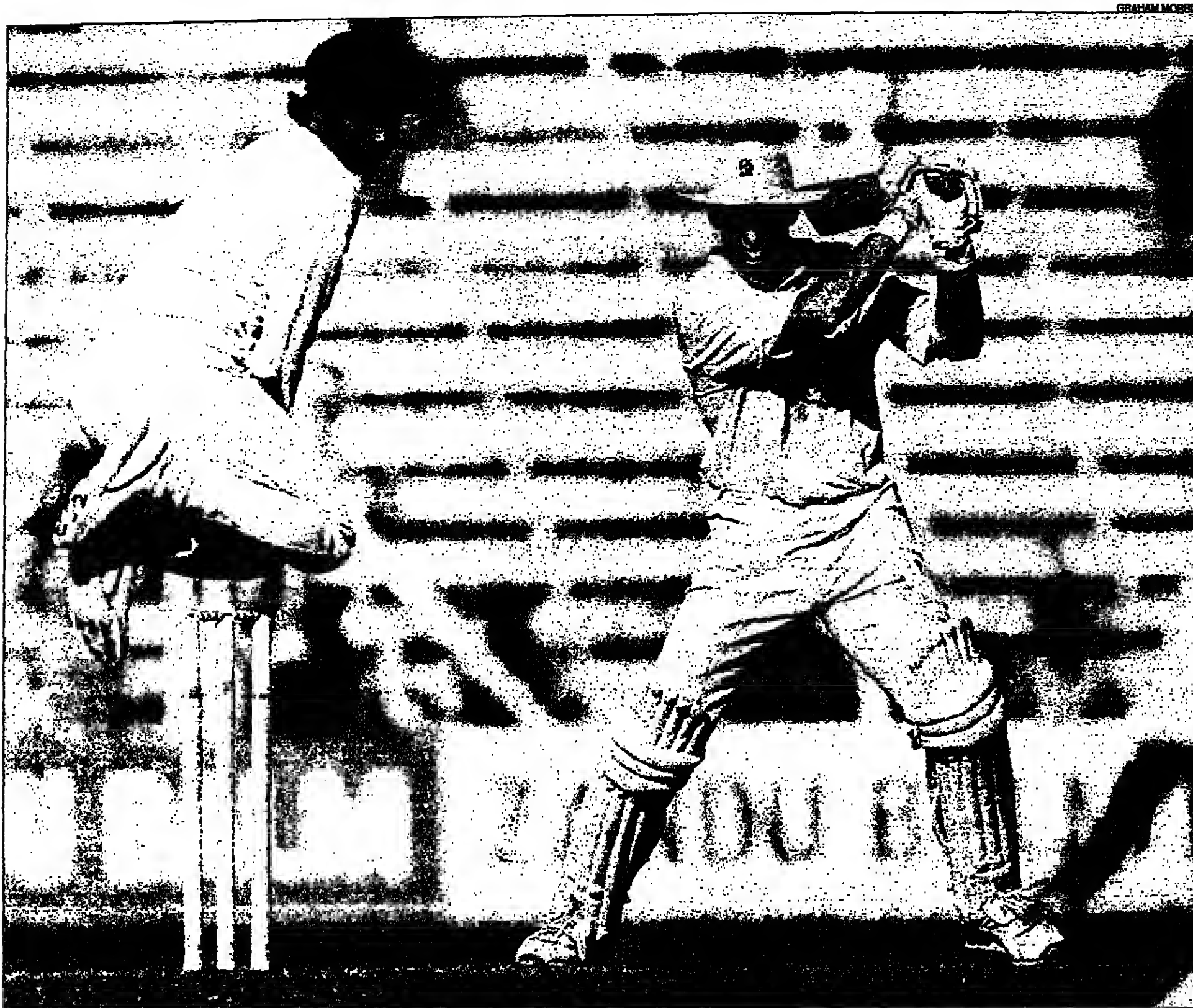
Information supplied by Ski Hotline

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL NBA: Eastern Conference Semifinals: New York Knicks 114, Miami Heat 101; Boston Celtics 105, Philadelphia 76ers 98; Chicago Bulls 119, Los Angeles Lakers 103; Seattle SuperSonics 131, Golden State Warriors 116. NBA: Western Conference Semifinals: Los Angeles Lakers 114, Portland Trail Blazers 101; San Antonio Spurs 115, Dallas Mavericks 105; Houston Rockets 110, Utah Jazz 105; Minnesota Timberwolves 121, San Diego Clippers 107. NBA: Finals: Boston Celtics 114, Los Angeles Lakers 101; Chicago Bulls 119, Los Angeles Lakers 103; Seattle SuperSonics 131, Golden State Warriors 116. NBA: Finals: Boston Celtics 114, Los Angeles Lakers 101; Chicago Bulls 119, Los Angeles Lakers 103; Seattle SuperSonics 131, Golden State Warriors 116.	GOLF PGA TOUR: First Round: Greg Norman 67, Tiger Woods 68, Phil Mickel 69, Fred Couples 70, Tom Kite 71, John Cook 72, Mark O'Meara 73, Corey Pae 74, David Toms 75, Steve Stricker 76, Jeff Maggert 77, Jim Furyk 78, Matt Kuchar 79, Tim Lincecum 80, Jeff Leach 81, Jeff Thomas 82, Jeff Borja 83, Jeff Borja 84, Jeff Borja 85, Jeff Borja 86, Jeff Borja 87, Jeff Borja 88, Jeff Borja 89, Jeff Borja 90, Jeff Borja 91, Jeff Borja 92, Jeff Borja 93, Jeff Borja 94, Jeff Borja 95, Jeff Borja 96, Jeff Borja 97, Jeff Borja 98, Jeff Borja 99, Jeff Borja 100. PGA TOUR: Second Round: Greg Norman 70, Tiger Woods 71, Phil Mickel 72, Fred Couples 73, Tom Kite 74, John Cook 75, Mark O'Meara 76, Corey Pae 77, David Toms 78, Steve Stricker 79, Jeff Maggert 80, Jim Furyk 81, Matt Kuchar 82, Tim Lincecum 83, Jeff Leach 84, Jeff Thomas 85, Jeff Borja 86, Jeff Borja 87, Jeff Borja 88, Jeff Borja 89, Jeff Borja 90, Jeff Borja 91, Jeff Borja 92, Jeff Borja 93, Jeff Borja 94, Jeff Borja 95, Jeff Borja 96, Jeff Borja 97, Jeff Borja 98, Jeff Borja 99, Jeff Borja 100.	ICE HOCKEY NHL: Eastern Conference Quarterfinals: New York Rangers 4, St. Louis Blues 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2. NHL: Western Conference Quarterfinals: St. Louis Blues 4, New York Islanders 2; Chicago Blackhawks 7, Los Angeles Kings 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Vancouver Canucks 2; San Jose Sharks 5, Winnipeg Jets 3. NHL: Divisional Semifinals: New York Rangers 4, St. Louis Blues 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2; Philadelphia Flyers 3, Pittsburgh Penguins 2.	RUGBY UNION REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES: Scotland Under-21 19, Wales Under-21 16; Scotland Under-18 18, Wales Under-18 15; Scotland Under-16 18, Wales Under-16 15; Scotland Under-14 18, Wales Under-14 15; Scotland Under-12 18, Wales Under-12 15; Scotland Under-10 18, Wales Under-10 15; Scotland Under-8 18, Wales Under-8 15; Scotland Under-6 18, Wales Under-6 15; Scotland Under-4 18, Wales Under-4 15; Scotland Under-2 18, Wales Under-2 15; Scotland Under-0 18, Wales Under-0 15; Scotland Under-1 18, Wales Under-1 15; Scotland Under-3 18, Wales Under-3 15; Scotland Under-5 18, Wales Under-5 15; Scotland Under-7 18, Wales Under-7 15; Scotland Under-9 18, Wales Under-9 15; Scotland Under-11 18, Wales Under-11 15; Scotland Under-13 18, Wales Under-13 15; Scotland Under-15 18, Wales Under-15 15; Scotland Under-17 18, Wales Under-17 15; Scotland Under-19 18, Wales Under-19 15; Scotland Under-21 18, Wales Under-21 15; Scotland Under-23 18, Wales Under-23 15; Scotland Under-25 18, Wales Under-25 15; 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Scotland Under-221 18, Wales Under-221 15; Scotland Under-223 18, Wales Under-223 15; Scotland Under-225 18, Wales Under-225 15; Scotland Under-227 18, Wales Under-227 15; Scotland Under-229 18, Wales Under-229 15; Scotland Under-231 18, Wales Under-231 15; Scotland Under-233 18, Wales Under-233 15; Scotland Under-235 18, Wales Under-235 15; Scotland Under-237 18, Wales Under-237 15; Scotland Under-239 18, Wales Under-239 15; Scotland Under-241 18, Wales Under-241 15; Scotland Under-243 18, Wales Under-243 15; Scotland Under-245 18, Wales Under-245 15; Scotland Under-247 18, Wales Under-247 15; Scotland Under-249 18, Wales Under-249 15; Scotland Under-251 18, Wales Under-251 15; Scotland Under-253 18, Wales Under-253 15; Scotland Under-255 18, Wales Under-255 15; Scotland Under-257 18, Wales Under-257 15; Scotland Under-259 18, Wales Under-25
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Brilliant unbeaten 99 turns tables on India in third Test match

Hick keeps England in hunt



Finding the gap: a fielder takes evasive action as Hick hammers the ball through the off side during his chanceless innings in Bombay yesterday

FROM PETER BALL
IN BOMBAY

A MAGNIFICENT undefeated 99 by Graeme Hick restored England to respectability here yesterday after a calamitous start to the third and final Test match. England finished the first day on 239 for seven, unimaginable riches when they collapsed to 118 for six soon after lunch.

Should Hick complete his first Test hundred this morning, the 68th first-class century of his career, it will have taken him 14 Tests to do so. But on yesterday's evidence, the wait will have been worthwhile.

If he goes on to score as prolifically in the Test arena as he has in county cricket, he will rarely play a better or more valuable innings for his country.

"We needed an innings like that," Keith Fletcher, the manager, said, delighted at the prospect of Hick breaking through as an England batsman. "He just needs to get confidence. You can score as many runs as you like in county cricket, but you have still got to prove to yourself that you can do it at Test level."

"I'd like to see him go on and get a big hundred,

because it would do him the world of good. And if he does start scoring runs, we really have got a fine cricketer, because he is an outstanding catcher and a good off spinner."

At a time of supreme need, Hick came to England's rescue with a virtually faultless display on a turning wicket against Indian spinners with their tails up. He batted for 249 minutes without giving a chance, using his feet well, killing the spin assuredly and punishing the loose ball severely.

Only Michael Atherton, who shared a stand of 58, and Chris Lewis, who again batted excellently as he helped Hick add 93 for the seventh wicket, looked remotely as comfortable as England's deficiencies on a turning wicket were again exposed. Robin Smith and Richard Blakey, in for Neil Fairbrother, looked out of their depth, and even Mike Gatting seems less certain against spin.

The suspicion that winning the toss might not be as much of an advantage as in the previous Tests was quickly proved. The wicket took spin from the moment Kumble and Raju appeared after 12

England won toss

ENGLAND: First Innings

	On	4s	6s	Min	Ball
*G A Gooch c More b Kapil Dev	4	—	—	27	19
Field edge to wicketkeeper					
A J Stewart run out	13	—	—	57	43
Mid-air catch over short slip					
M A Atherton c Prabhakar b Kumble	37	—	—	147	113
Mid-air catch over short slip					
R A Smith c More b Raju	2	—	—	6	8
Low sharp catch off inside edge and pad					
M W Gatting c Kapil Dev b Raju	23	—	—	39	45
Caught at first slip — turning ball to leg					
G A Hick not out	99	—	—	249	189
Best in right					
†R J Blakey bow b Kumble	1	—	—	7	11
Best in right					
C C Lewis bow b Kumble	46	—	—	116	112
Playing back to quicker ball					
J E Embury not out	5	—	—	58	57
Edges (p 3, to 2, no 1)					
Total (7 wds, 361 min, 89 overs)	239				
P A J DeFreitas and P C R Tufnell to bat					

overs of seam. By then, England were already toiling and things rapidly worsened.

Graham Gooch was adjudged caught behind, trudging back to the pavilion reluctantly. But if Gooch was unhappy, Stewart was furious after a farcical run-out.

England's vice-captain had started well but his eagerness to disrupt the spinners by taking quick singles got the better of him as he pushed a ball from Kumble into the

covers and set off for a run. Atherton rightly refused as Tendulkar swooped, but Stewart carried on running to join Atherton at the bowler's end.

To compound the error, Tendulkar's throw to the wicketkeeper was wild. Amre, backing up, initially failed to gather the ball, and scrambled frantically as the batsmen glared at each other. Had Stewart tried to recover his ground he might have done so. But he stayed at the

bowler's end, and Amre finally threw down the wicket. Stewart waited for the umpire to decide which batsman should depart, and left in high dudgeon.

That dismissal typified a struggling team, and for the rest of the morning England fulfilled that gloomy prognosis. Smith was dismissed by Raju and went quickly, beaten by turn.

Gatting began as if he intended to bring some stabili-

ty. He could not resist hitting against the spin, however, and after surviving one grotesque sweep against the left-hander he attempted to turn another ball that was leaving him to leg and edged it to slip.

That brought Hick to join Atherton, who had been batting with customary organisation and intelligence, using his feet to get forward, and for a time things steadied. They seemed secure until Atherton did well to keep a ball from Kumble down and wide of slip, only to lob a simple catch to mid-on next ball.

Blakey came and went immediately, and at 118 for six, the policy of playing an extra batsman seemed flawed. But the impressive Hick found someone to stay with him, Lewis again showing that there was little to fear from the Indian spinners for anyone prepared to get to the pitch of the ball.

If it was not as exciting an innings as his century in Madras, it was a testimony to his responsibility in testing circumstances. If he continues in this vein, he will become the all-rounder England desperately want him to be.

Gatting began as if he intended to bring some stabili-

Premier League
raises glass
to record £12m
sponsorship

BY LOUISE TAYLOR

THE FA Premier League yesterday secured the most lucrative sponsorship contract in British sporting history when it agreed a four-year £12 million deal with Bass, the brewer. The previous biggest was Embassy's seven-year £11 million tie-up with snooker.

From August, the competition will be known as the FA Carling Premier League — Bass, Britain's biggest brewer, is the producer of the lager, Carling Black Label.

Last year, a group of eight Premier League clubs banded together to block a £10 million Bass sponsorship on three separate occasions because they felt it would cause conflict of interest involving their own individual agreements with breweries.

Liverpool has a contract with Carlsberg, Nottingham Forest with Labatts, Tottenham Hotspur with Holsten and Blackburn Rovers with McSwans. Their teams wear shirts emblazoned with their sponsor's name but, from next season, they will have to incorporate a Bass/Premier League logo.

After a gathering of the Premier League chairman in London yesterday, it was decided that a collective £3 million a year, which guarantees each club £137,000 a season, was too good an offer to turn down.

Liverpool and Forest voiced misgivings — they are concerned that the deal will jeopardise their chances of renewing individual contracts — but the meeting lasted just minutes and the issue was not even put to a vote.

Rick Parry, the Premier League's chief executive, said: "This conflict of interests was obviously an issue for some clubs but Bass are happy for rival brewers to continue individual sponsorships."

"If any other brewer wants to sign a new sponsorship deal, they will also be welcome. Bass have made it clear they will do nothing to compromise individual agreements or cause breach of contracts."

The Bass contract is subject to ratification by the FA Council, which meets on March 8, but that will merely be rubber-stamping operation. Bass already sponsor the Scot-

tish Cup through their Tennents label and the rugby League championship via Stones bitter.

Parry said: "Bass's commitment shows faith in the Premier League's ability to lead football into a new era. Of course Liverpool and other clubs with brewery sponsors are concerned. But we are all grown-ups and believe we can make it work. There is a spirit of co-operation and unity."

The agreement marks a personal triumph for Parry, who has coaxed the chairman into coming around to the idea of a central sponsorship. "I'm delighted to have secured it at long last," he said. "The cash will be helpful for clubs faced with ground improvement bills."

Parry has also averted the



threat of the so-called "Platinum Eight" clubs, who were originally opposed to the Bass deal and formed their own rebel breakaway group. The eight, led by Liverpool, have already signed a £300,000 per club agreement with Dorna, a perimeter advertising firm.

Sir John Quinton, the Premier League chairman, said: "If the Platinum Eight ever existed, I don't think they do now." The value of the contract highlights the extent to which football sponsorship has grown over the past ten years. In 1983, when the Football League signed its first such deal with Canon, it was worth £3.3 million for three years and involved 92 clubs. A decade on, Bass has paid almost four times as much for one division.

Cricket, in which Cornhill Insurance has invested £3.2 million in backing Test matches for its present two-year contract, is not in the same league.

Today's team news, page 35
Maradona's return, page 35

Big day in the testing life of a gentle bully

I wonder what Graeme Hick's dreams were like last night. Or if he was asleep long enough to have any. To be marooned overnight on 99 would discompose a man with the hide of Ian Botham. For Hick, whose sensitivities and gentle nature have been revealed in his painful innings, this is the stuff of nightmares.

All the same, in a strange and surreal kind of way — you don't often get other kinds of way in India — yesterday was a colossal day for Hick. At least he became, without a shadow of a doubt, the dominating figure in a full day of Test cricket. In conditions that tested both skill and temperament, Hick stood firm, the runs came.

This innings was not impish, or joyful, or breathtaking, or sparkling. It was a

strange mishmash. It began in poking clumsiness — there is always something woolly about a big man pinned down by spin. A banner in the crowd hailed "India's three-prawn spin attack". England and Hick had had a bellyful of them well before lunch, which was taken at 62 for four, with Hick yet to score.

Hick has become incapable of playing his natural game. He has changed his approach and his technique. His tactics and his strategy so many times that he cannot sustain the role he played so comfortably in his long years of waiting with Worcestershire.

These days, he can only block like a neurotic or wallow the ball in wild overcompensation. He is either a miser or a sailor on shore

SIMON
BARNES

At the Bombay Test

leave. The middle way has been lost to him. After lunch, and a further period of poking and worrying, he launched a sudden and bewildering counter-attack — three successive fours were cracked away with relish. He then hit each spinner in turn over the top. For a second, it seemed that we were in for a classic counter-attacking innings.

But two more wickets fell, and the moment was lost. Lewis and Hick — two problem boys, both picked more in hope than expectation,

time after time — then took the game into the strangest period of a strange day.

Both settled into a rhythm of controlled passivity, as if lulled by the passive captaincy of Azharuddin. The spinners spun, the batsmen quietly fed on long trotted singles, the sun began to sink, and it seemed as if nobody would be out again, ever.

As if in a dream, Hick continued his longest and most effective Test innings. The mood of gentleness was not broken until Lewis was

out on 49 — this was a day of missed milestones.

Poor Hick. The dreaded figure drew ever closer, single by painful, trotted single. In the final extraordinary half-hour, anxiety dominated once again. The day's bizarre conclusion was inevitable. Can you imagine Botham getting into such a position? That reprobate would have hit the last ball of the day for six, or at least have been out trying. But there is no swag about Hick, no theatre, no love of style.

He is the classic heavy-batsman. Every booming drive excites admiration rather than exhilaration. I wonder if the promised bucket of runs will now materialise, and whether Hick's first big innings is the first of many. Did yesterday at last burst the dam?

Hick is a quiet chap from a quiet place, a small town man from Zimbabwe. He has established for himself a record of sinking to the big occasion. He was comprehensively sorted out by the West Indian quick bowlers and later memorably reviled by John Bracewell, the New Zealand off-spinner, as "a flat track bully". He was a man who had lost himself.

He had tried everything, including a sports psychologist. He has talked about things with surprising honesty. It was clear that there only two things wrong with his batting — his inability to play fast bowling, and his inability to play slow bowling. But somehow a sense of bewildered disbelief seems to have kept him going. I wonder where this gentle bully will go next.

BY FAR
THE BEST DROP
OF THE
TOURNAMENT

The
SPIRIT OF THE GAME

ELITE SPONSORS OF THE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

RALD DAVIES
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in love

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agony

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FAIR

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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20 1993

Life, the universe and me

In extracts from his new book,
Timothy Ferris offers titbits from the
tapas bar of the science world

Comet catastrophes

COMETS are agents not only of life but of death. It seems that something (a companion star, perhaps) periodically sends squadrons of comets plunging into the inner solar system, where they subject the Earth to a mighty pelting. Such is the prevalent explanation of what caused the massive extinction events that dot the fossil record, recording grim episodes when as many as nine tenths of all living species disappeared more or less overnight (that is, in geological time, over thousands rather than millions of years).

If so, comets present us with a morality tale about how the same event can seem very different from two points of view. The catastrophe that wiped out the dinosaurs looks relatively cheerful. It made way for our ancestors to evolve, and thus granted us dominion over our planet. But now that we rule, we seek no further visitations by celestial doom. An alarmed Nasa is thinking of arming missiles to push threatening comets off course, lest the world be transformed anew.



Inner and outer space

ALL that we can ever comprehend of the universe must reside within our minds. That's the human condition, and the predicament of every other intelligent being in the universe, too. You may be a city-sized squid so smart that you can compose a symphony and balance the galactic budget before breakfast, but your conception of the universe will of necessity always dwell within your mind.

This means, of course, that one's model of the universe is smaller — lesser, in some sense — than the reality.

But that's not such a bad thing. Models by definition are lesser than the reality they represent. The amazing thing is not that mental models of nature are flawed or disjunctive, but that they work at all. The equations of Kepler, Newton and Einstein really do account for the trajectories of the Moon and the Andromeda galaxy. Nobody knows why this should be so.

Nanotechnology

IN the age of steamships and skyscrapers engineers learnt to think big. Now, in the age of the microchip and genetic engineering, they're learning to think very

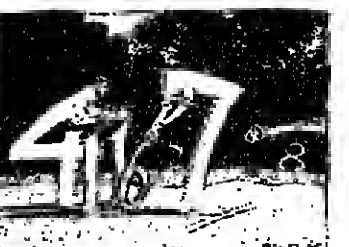
small. Researchers in nanotechnology (from *nanos*, Greek for dwarf) dream of constructing powerful computers smaller than a living cell and machines smaller than a virus.

Molecular-scale "nanosubs" assembled from individual atoms could clear clogged arteries, break down cancer-causing oncogenes, clean up oil spills, or comb the upper atmosphere for pollutants. The applications are almost limitless.

Preliminary work indicates that nanotechnology may indeed be feasible. Scientists at the University of California, Berkeley, have built a working motor smaller in diameter than a human hair, equipped with rotating arms the size of blood cells. Researchers at IBM have managed to manipulate individual xenon atoms. But many difficulties remain. Molecules are floppy — to press them into service as bearings and gear teeth will require the skills of a lathe operator combined with those of a weaver — and heat makes them jitter more violently than an auto-assembly plant in an earthquake.

Perhaps here, as in aeronautics, navigation, and many other varieties of engineering, answers will be found by studying how nature does the job. Living cells, after all, are equipped with simple nanomachines (proteins) controlled by computer-like molecules (DNA). In an embryo they build from the bottom up, starting with a single cell that replicates and differentiates until the result is a mushroom. Our grandchildren may employ similar technology to grow computers, surgical implants, buildings and spaceships.

The mathematics of games
ILLOGICAL is the interaction of game players' minds with the inflexible laws of mathematical



probability. Most of us believe, for instance, in winning streaks, yet mathematicians studying sports records conclude that there is no such thing. This is true even in player-influenced games such as cricket and basketball, where we might expect that players who believe in winning streaks might do better when they think they're on one. Even more illusory, therefore, must be the widespread

supposition that winning streaks exist in games such as roulette, where the player cannot influence the outcome.

Yet few of us accept these facts. Except for professional gamblers, who prosper at the gaming tables but tend to find them boring (it's all so predictable if you know the odds), most of us prefer to go on believing in the magical notion that each can be visited by intervals of good luck.

And that is why the owners of the Flamingo, the first big casino to open in Las Vegas, realised a \$10 billion profit on a \$6 million investment.

Robot servants

BACK when computers first came on the scene, scientists and sci-fi writers alike assumed that they would soon be put to work as the electronic brains of household robots. It didn't work out that way.

Computers have proved adept at handling abstract challenges such as flying spaceships, playing chess and solving quadratic equations, but housework is too hard.

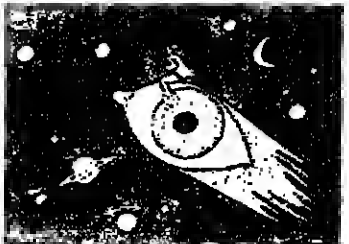
It seems that scientists at first underrated the amount of brain power required to carry out physical acts. More recently they have begun to appreciate that actions are governed by higher-brain centres, just as abstract thought, and are dauntingly complex. Speech itself, arguably the hallmark of human intelligence, appears to be processed by the brain as but one among many complex sequences of actions — one that may have arisen in response to selection pressures involving the throwing of spears and stones.

Janitors, house movers, athletes

and many other practitioners of what academics once looked down on as merely physical tasks are accomplishing what no computer — not even the giant machines that can beat professors at chess — has yet begun to master.

An eye on the heavens
EVERYTHING we see belongs to the past.

Because light travels quickly — 186,000 miles per second — we



seldom notice the delay locally, but it becomes more important as we look out into space. Light from Jupiter takes 35 minutes to reach us when that giant planet is nearest to Earth, and nearly an hour when they are farthest apart. This affects the observed timing of eclipses of Jupiter's moons. As the Earth moves in its orbit around the Sun, it sometimes approaches Jupiter and sometimes recedes from it. If we are moving towards Jupiter, by the time the second of a pair of eclipses takes place, the light has less distance to travel and the eclipse therefore is seen early; when the Earth is moving away from Jupiter, the second of a pair of eclipses seems to be late. It was by observing eclipses that the 17th-century Danish astronomer Olaus Rømer first estimated the velocity of light.

We see galaxies as they looked millions of years ago, and quasars — the furiously burning cores of young galaxies — as they were billions of years in the past. The whole tapestry of cosmic history awaits our inspection. All we have to do to see better is to build more powerful telescopes.

Time travel
THEORISTS tilling the fertile gardens of Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity tell us that time travel may indeed be possible — not here in the ordinary world, where journeys into the past would violate fundamental laws of science and logic, but in the netherworld that lurks within the black holes. There, on the slopes of steeply curving space, one might find "spacetime loops" spun in such a fashion that an astronaut who dived into one would emerge in the past.

The American physicist J. Richard Gott III, working with a conjecture first published by Kip Thorne, described such a scenario. "If you fell into a black hole you'd look for a closed time-like curve, because entering one would forestall your doom," Gott remarked. "If you made your way to an entrance you'd see, say, 11 copies of yourself. The first version of yourself might say, 'I've been around twice,' the second, 'I've been around once,' and so on. You plunge into the loop, fly around it, and return to see yourself entering the black hole. Wanting to be helpful, you cry out, 'I've been around once.' You're now the first image of yourself that you saw when you entered. After another trip, again encountering your original self, you call out, 'I've

been around twice.' And so on, until, after 11 times around, you leave the loop, only to be killed a short time later when you crash into the singularity at the centre of the black hole."

Gaia: planetary medicine

IN the words of its originator, the British chemist James E. Lovelock, the Gaia hypothesis (named for the Greek goddess of the Earth) maintains "that the entire range of living matter on Earth, from whales to viruses, can be regarded as a single entity, capable of manipulating its environment to suit its needs". This is certainly a provocative idea — one that among many other things suggests that any species that insults the biosphere — us, for instance — may expect to be rejected by it, or to be damped

down in something like the way that an oyster isolates an intruding speck of sand by entombing it in a pearl.

But Gaia also leads to talk of "managing" the planet, and if we are to do that we shall have to learn a great many hard lessons, and swiftly.

The losers, if we fail, will not be life on Earth — the biosphere as a whole remains far beyond our powers of destruction — but ourselves. The situation thus harbours a delicious if dangerous symmetry. It implies that we are likely to get exactly what we deserve.

© Professor Ferris teaches astronomy at the University of California, Berkeley. *The Universe and I*, text by Timothy Ferris, illustrations by Ingram Finn, is published by Pavilion Books on March 4, price £9.99.

This isn't narcissism, it's the real thing

I tended to believe most of what Michael Jackson said in his Oprah Winfrey interview, even though he also said, "That's the craziest story I've ever heard in my whole, whole life" at least three times about three different rumours which Oprah put to him to verify. So I did believe him when he said it had only taken two small plastic surgery operations to transform him from the boy he was before into a sort of copy of Diana Ross. After all, egotism being what it is, Michael probably idolised Diana in the first place because he knew at the back of his mind that he already looked like her.

In the world of romance, looking like someone or like a member of their immediate family is one of the most reliable indicators that marriage will shortly result. People can't help mistaking these waves of unconscious narcissism for *coups de foudre*. And it is just as well that they can't. Lookalike marriages are usually the most stable and happiest of all, regardless of the couple's ostensible incompatibility.

There are variations of the syndrome. Some people have affairs with a sequence of men or women

who do not look like them but look exactly the same as each other. Perhaps they represent favourite aunts or grandfathers. I certainly have an inexplicable attraction to thin, bald men with glasses, and many crusty old quinquagenarians who trade their wives in often go for a version of the same model, only 30 years younger.

My own friend Camilla had a boyfriend who, after they had split up amicably, had a miraculous talent for producing girl after girl who looked just like her. Camilla who looked that each time she ran into her former suitor accompanied by one of these lookalikes, it was "like seeing versions of myself in a fairground mirror".

Dave himself was reluctant to acknowledge the similarities — indeed, he used to go all peculiar and refuse to discuss them.

Unconscious narcissism permeates all levels of social interaction, including ordinary friendship, teenage crushes, and schoolgirl pashes. When I was about 15, there was a younger girl at school who admired me — probably because



WEEKEND
voice

MARY
KILLEN

she already looked very like me. She grew her hair into the same style as mine and even copied the affection I had developed of walking with my right hand held in a stupid dangling position.

Needless to say, I was thrilled by this tribute. "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," I remarked to my best friend, as we all marched out of school one day, Christine on the other side of the road with her hand dangling.

"Doo! flatter yourself," retorted my friend. "She doesn't look a bit like you, and she isn't trying to." At that moment my father's car pulled to a halt on the other side of the road and he opened the door to give Christine a lift home.

Narcissism also affects the cinematic role models you aspire to or identify with. You only have to examine the queue outside a Woody Allen movie to see an embarrassing number of weedy and intellectual-looking men with glasses waiting to get in.

The same applies to rock stars, and sometimes even second best will do. It must have been both a boon and a curse for the man I used to see walking up and down the King's Road, Chelsea, who looked exactly like Rod Stewart. Clearly he had taken the decision that he should make the most of it and dressed like Rod and looked shifty around him as though worried about being recognised. One saw him every so often entering nightclubs in the early hours with foreign-looking girls, their faces flushed with almost hysterical excitement as they came in "with Rod Stewart". I often wondered what happened when they found out, or was it enough that strangers had thought them to be "with Rod Stewart"?

Of course, you have to be familiar with the type in order to recognise it

in the first place. I was once walking through an alley in Soho at lunchtime and saw, as though in a hallucination, that it was completely full of muscly youths with earrings, sleeveless denim jackets, leather trousers and waist-length hair. They were queuing outside a ticket office. "What are those people?" I asked my companion, seven years younger than me. "Bon Jovi fans," she said matter of factly. I am just as suggestible and was easily tricked when a smirking friend asked me a few years ago to name my favourite film star.

I thought for a moment, then, inwardly congratulating myself on having rejected Catherine Deneuve, said: "Well, I know she's not the most beautiful, but she is the funniest I think — Goldie Hawn."

My friend laughed triumphantly. "You know you can ask any girl who her favourite film star is and she will always give herself away by saying the one she thinks that she is most like. It's a test."

"Really," said my friend Emma, when I reported this to her. "I'd have expected you to choose Dame Margaret Rutherford."

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Footsteps in the sand

Tobago has never wooed tourists in great numbers, but the island is every bit the paradise where Daniel Defoe's castaway found peace. James MacManus reports

Tobago is the Cinderella of the Caribbean, an island long treated with contempt by its ugly, governing sister, Trinidad, and excluded from the tourist boom of the 1980s that enriched neighbours to the north, such as Barbados. Unlike Barbados, there is no nightlife on Tobago. When the sun goes down there's little else to do but drink rum punch, look at the stars and listen to the sea.

This is one reason why those who have discovered this quiet and gentle island keep going back. The whole Caribbean was like this 30 years ago, before lengthened runways and wide-body jets brought in hordes of whey-faced northerners desperate for a mid-winter break.

The population of about 40,000 genuinely welcomes visitors because they pose no threat to the slow, pleasurable lifestyle or the luxuriant landscape. As a result, there is virtually no crime on Tobago. A fisherman there boasted to me last month that a woman could ride a bicycle the 28 miles length of the island in the middle of the night without risking anything worse than a puncture.

Unlike the ethnic cocktail in Trinidad, the local population is almost purely of African descent, and seems to have the confidence that a strong sense of identity confers. There is none of the resentment of wealthy tourists that is creeping in elsewhere in the Caribbean.

A drive north from the airport at Crown Point, through plantations of palm trees and up along the central spine of hills — crowned with the largest rainforest in the Caribbean — shows you how lucky

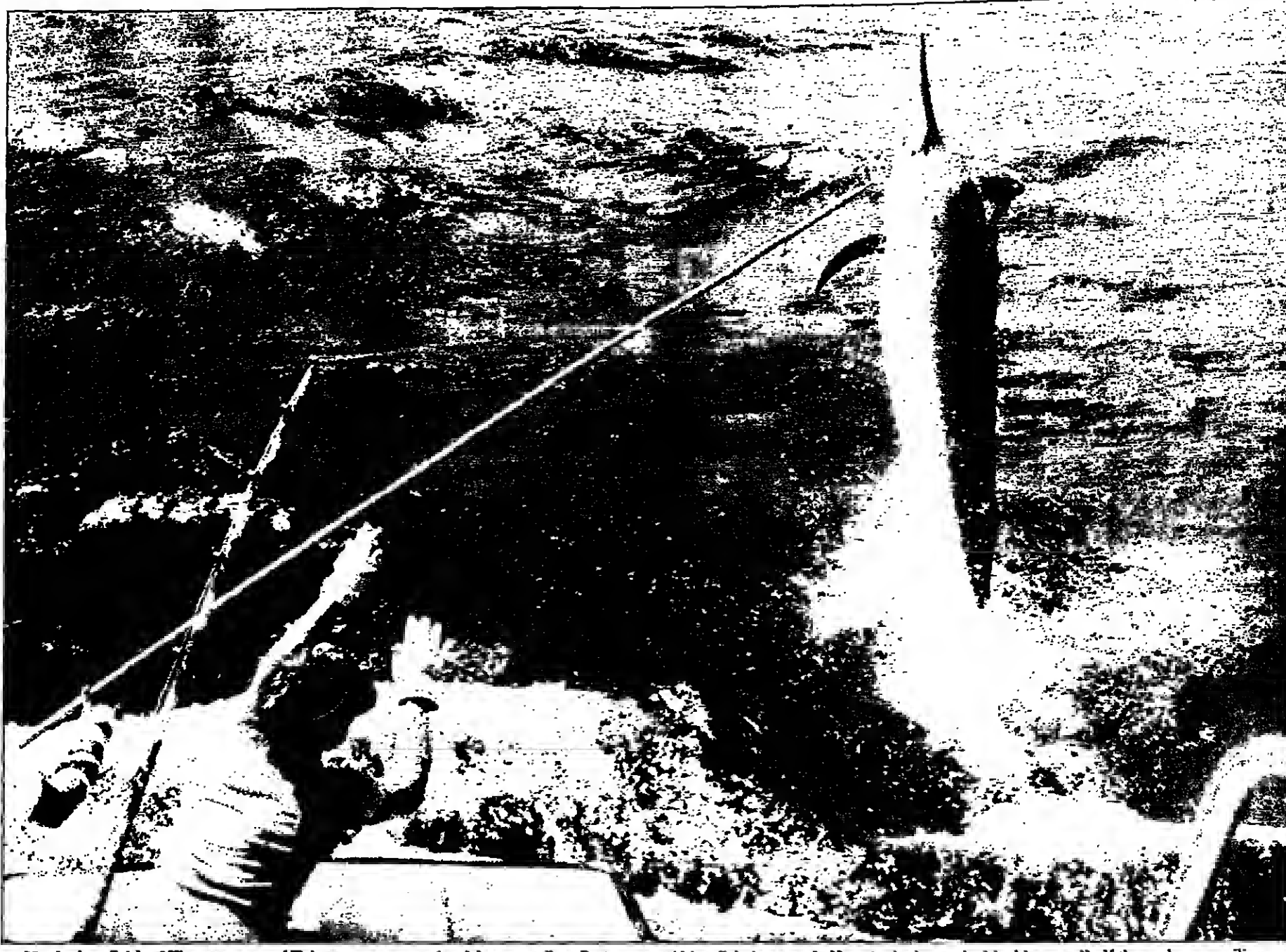
this island has been. The beauty is breathtaking. There are no tourist "facilities", villa developments or holiday apartment blocks.

Ill served by its airline (BWIA) and a bankrupt Trinidadian government, Tobago never had a chance of becoming a mass tourist destination. Only one luxury hotel has been built on the island in the last 20 years. The number of visitors remains steady at 40,000 a year, while Barbados clocks in 600,000.

If all this sounds rather too good to be true, I can only urge you to see for yourself. Daniel Defoe never visited Tobago, but he drew on reports of the early English and French colonisers to create the setting for *Robinson Crusoe*. The island still has that sense of idyllic innocence. And the price of *Crusoe's* paradise can be very reasonable. Friends with a ten-year-old boy and ten-month-old baby took a two-room package deal with Kuoni at the Turtle Beach hotel for 13 nights half-board in January, flight included, at £2,300. This hotel is 20 minutes from the airport and slung in a long, two-storey structure between palm trees on a two-mile long beach.

Here, the fishermen pull in their nets every afternoon, there's a beach bar where you can watch pelicans scoop fish from the sea and the sun and the excellent local beer go down. Swimming is safe, except when the surf's up. For those with young children this is the place. The Turtle Beach is a simple hotel, with clean, air-conditioned rooms all facing the beach. The food should be better, given the abundance of fish and fresh fruit, but a couple of high-powered rum punches mitigates this problem.

'It's idyllic... for those with young children, this is the place'



Hooked on fishing? The seas around Tobago are among the richest — yellow fin tunny and king fish, barracuda if you're lucky, and a big blue marlin if the gods are smiling

There are two secrets that will make a holiday in Tobago. The first is to hire a car and use it both to explore the island and escape the hotel cooking. Most hotels are on the western side of the island, where the Caribbean sea is calm and warm. But the Atlantic side is wilder and more beautiful.

A trip north from the delightful shambles of the capital, Scarborough, takes you along the west coast to Charlotteville. This fishing village has a guest house, a good beach and a restaurant, Jemima's Seaview Kitchen, serving grilled kingfish and local beer for £4.

On the way back, drop in at Tobago's most fashionable hotel, the Blue Waters Inn, at Speyside, where a double room costs about £40 a night, without meals. Then skip the coast road and drive up into the rainforest and explore a

dozen villages that line the crest of the ridge back to Scarborough.

The second secret is to do the obvious things, however touristy they sound. Go to the much-hyped Pigeon Point beach, walk to the end of the tiny, thatched jetty that features in every rum ad you've ever seen, open a beer and talk fish and politics with the locals. Then sign up for a trip to the reef in a glass-bottomed boat. It's fun and, at £6 for two hours, not a budget breaker.

The fishing off Tobago is better than anywhere else in the Caribbean, so it's crazy not to try it. Ring Iain Milne on 639 0078 (0101 809 from UK) and book his 32ft, six-person boat, Albatross, for a morning's fishing at about £140 (or £240 for the day). He supplies rods, reels, bait and soft drinks. The hotel will give you sandwiches and anti-sea-sickness pills.

Mr Milne is a celebrated figure in Tobago, where he is universally

known as Wabba, a childhood nickname which has something to do with his inability to roll an "r". He is also a remarkable fisherman. The Albatross is packed with electronic fish-finding equipment. You will catch yellow fin tunny and king fish for sure, barracuda if you're lucky, and a big blue marlin if the gods are smiling and the shade of Ernest Hemingway is not too far over the cosmic horizon.

If you're the kind of fisherman who likes to keep land in sight, Wabba will fish the shallows during a two-hour run from your hotel to any one of 100 desolate beaches around the north of the island. The catch is grilled on the beach over a driftwood fire and served with a squeeze of lime juice. And there won't be a soul in sight.

Take a swig from a bottle of pre-mixed punch, lie back and open a copy of *Robinson Crusoe*. It's an even better read here.

Tobago fact file

□ Packages from Caribbean Connections (0244 341131).
□ Hotels: Turtle Beach (639 2851; code from UK is 0101 809). Best bet for families. Cost: 14 nights, room only, £832 per person (inc. flights) May 3-July 9. £1,056 April 1-12. Half-board £29 a night extra.
Grafton Beach (639 0191). Latest luxury hotel. Good beach. Cost: 14 nights, room only, £868 per person (inc. flights) April 16-July 9. £1,139 April 1-12. Half-board £39 a night extra.
□ Other hotels: Mount Irvine (639 8871) used to be the hotel on the island. Cost: 14 nights, room only, BA flight, from £1,153; half-board £36 a night extra.
Acres Vale (639 2881). Good food. Small, pleasant beach, nice atmosphere. Cost: 13 nights,

room only, £729, room only, April 11-June 26 and August 22-September 25 with Thomson (081-200 8733). Half-board supplement £31 a night extra.
Blue Waters Inn, Speyside (660 4341). Good for divers. Cost: winter — 14 nights £1,321, room only, BA flight £125 less with BWIA. Summer — £1,060 with BA. £115 less with BWIA. Half-board supplement £21 a night extra.
Harlequin Travel (0708 852780). Arthur's by the Sea (639 0196). Ideal for backpacking island boppers. Air-conditioned rooms for about £12 a night. NO meals.
□ Car hire: Make sure the car has good tyres and full insurance. Air-conditioning helps. Ram Ratan (639 8271), near the airport, gives a discount to readers of *The Times* (inc. cost is about £20 a day).

The dawn of Christianity in the 10th century has provided the ancient city of Kiev with a splendid architectural heritage from the

Pecherskaya Lavra, Russia's oldest monastery to the magnificence of the Byzantine inspired Cathedral of St Sophia.



CRUISING THE MIGHTY DNEIPER

A SEVEN NIGHT RIVER JOURNEY ALONG THE MIGHTY DNEIPER THROUGH THE HEART OF THE UKRAINE LINKING THE HISTORIC WONDERS OF KIEV TO ODESSA ON THE BLACK SEA

THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 Fly London (Heathrow) with Finnair to Helsinki and stay overnight at the Intercontinental hotel.
DAY 2 Morning flight to Kiev arriving at lunch-time. Drive to the MS Glushkov and embark. Afternoon visit to the Cathedral of St Sophia and the Cathedral of St Andrew. Moor overnight in Kiev.
DAY 3 Morning visit to Pecherskaya Lavra monastery including the museum and Svyatynia gold artifacts and jewellery. Afternoon free. Sail in the evening.
DAY 4 Kharkov. Arrive in the morning. This is one of the oldest cities in the Ukraine. The great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko is buried here atop Taras Hill. See the Shevchenko Literary Memorial Museum and explore the city on foot. Sail in the afternoon.
DAY 5 Kremenchuk. Morning arrival in this city known for its parks, gardens and riverside beaches. Visit the Museum of History and Local Lore and stroll through the City Park. Sail in the afternoon.
DAY 6 Dnepropetrovsk. Morning arrival. A city of industry and culture. Amongst its assets are an Opera and Ballet company, a children's theatre, Philharmonic Orchestra

and circus. Programmes permitting we will offer a performance. In addition there are a number of museums. Sail in the evening.
DAY 7 New Kakhovka. Arrive in the morning. As its name implies, it is a new city built around a huge dam. It is an interesting and well designed garden city. Later sail to Kherson founded in 1778 as a fortress by Catherine the Great. See St Catherine's Cathedral and St Sophia's church. Sail in the evening.
DAY 8 Odessa. Arrive in the morning at this important port and resort. Odessa was founded in 1794 on the orders of Catherine the Great following the Russian victory over the Turks. See the famous Paterkin Steps, one of the most impressive sights in town, the Opera House and the ruins of the castle built by Catherine II. Moor overnight in Odessa.
DAY 9 Day free in Odessa until evening departure by train to Kiev.
DAY 10 Kiev. Arrive in the morning and drive to the centrally located Dnipro hotel or similar for a 2 night stay.
DAY 11 Kiev. An opportunity to visit the museums and galleries.
DAY 12 Fly from Kiev to London via Helsinki with Finnair.

Until recently Kiev has not been the most accessible of places to visit. However, now thanks to a new Finnair service we are able to offer the opportunity to visit the Ukraine with comparative ease and cruise through the wide open spaces of the Ukraine countryside visiting towns and villages that line the Dnieper.

We have included an overnight train journey from Odessa to Kiev in order to avoid internal flights, which for many will also be a highlight. In addition to the cruise there will also be a two night stay in Kiev, allowing time for a visit to see the icons in the Ukraine Art Gallery and also to the Museum of Russian Art.



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In twin bedded cabin/room	Main Deck	Upper Deck	Boat Deck	Suites
17 May	\$735	\$835	\$1035	
14 June	\$775	\$875	\$1075	
9-23 August	\$795	\$895	\$1095	
6-20 September	\$849	\$949	\$1149	
4 October	\$795	\$895	\$1095	
18 October	\$775	\$875	\$1075	
Single room supplement	\$185	\$285		

Price includes: Economy air travel, 1 night in Helsinki on breakfast only basis, 7 nights on the MS Glushkov on full board, overnight sleeper Odessa/Kiev (4 berth compartment for use as a twin bedded compartment), 2 nights in Kiev on full board basis, services of Tour Manager and Guest Speaker on vessel.

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Where ghosts are replicas

Warsaw is never free of its past, says Matthew d'Ancona

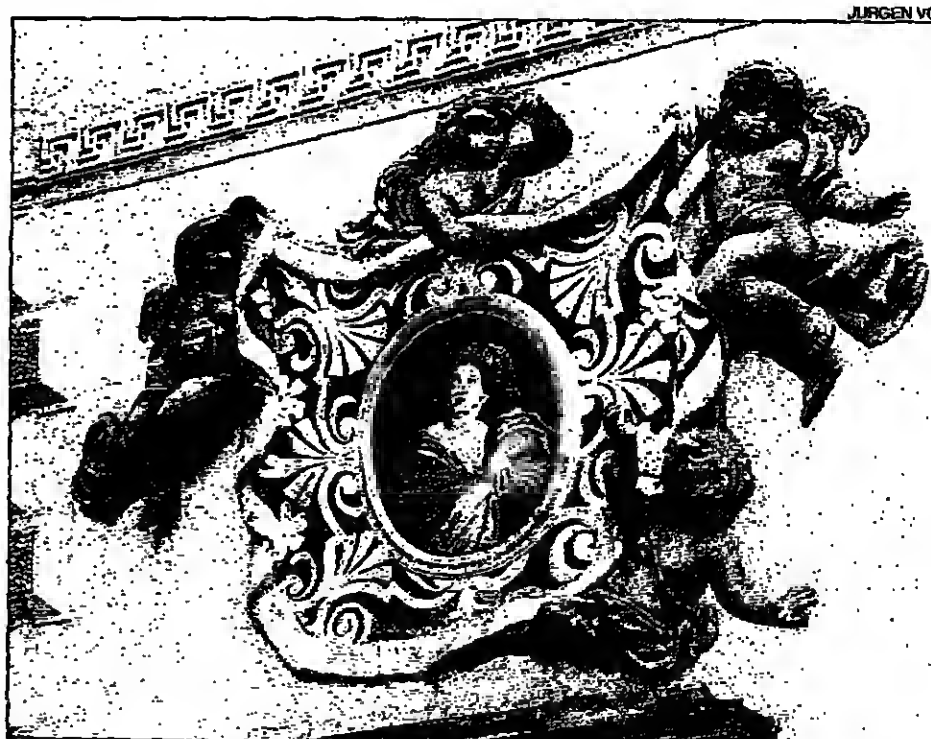
Warsaw, a city of bitter uprisings, is rising once again. Four years after democratic reform began, Poland's capital is tracing itself for the influx of dollar-rich visitors and businessmen who will pay for regeneration.

The yearning for change and prosperity is everywhere in the pages of *The Warsaw Voice*, on the construction sites and in the new shopping precincts. The spectre of capitalism is stalking the ancient city on the Vistula, guiding it towards a future rich with uncertainty.

Old Poland hands grumble that Warsaw is surrendering its bleak charm to the West and that McDonald's and sex shops will wreck the quality of life of its two million citizens. In many parts of the city, communist shabbiness has simply given way to consumerist tack. Yet it will take a lot more than hard currency and hamburgers to shake the national obsession with the past.

In fact, the Poles weave history into every remark. "Here we are in Marshal Jozef Pilsudski Square, named after our national hero," our guide said, as we drove into the heart of the city from the brutalist outskirts. "It used to be called Victory Square under the communists, and Hitler Square before that. And before that? Pilsudski Square."

The inexorable return of the past is a matter of amusement as well as resignation. Hence, perhaps, the Polish genius for restoration. No weekend in Warsaw is complete without at least an afternoon in the old town, a warren of tall pastel-coloured buildings stretching to the crisp winter sky. At the centre is the market square, where you can buy amber trinkets and beautiful prints of the city. But only after a brief history lesson in the square's museum do you realise that the whole quarter is a miraculous replica. A model of the old town razed by Hitler in 1944 and rebuilt gradually during the communist era.



Decorative arts: one of the baroque flourishes on the 17th-century Wilanow Palace

For this breathtaking exercise in virtual reality, Polish architects used as a blueprint the 18th-century paintings of Bernardo Bellotto, many of which can be seen in the (completely rebuilt) royal palace, reopened in 1981.

Visitors don slippers to wander around its sumptuous corridors, lined with portraits of the nation's royalty, through the Jagellonian dynasty to Stanislaw Augustus Poniatowski, Poland's last king (1764-95).

It is as if one has stepped into an oil painting from which the ancient regime courtiers have departed only momentarily. What would they have made of the Stalinist

palace of culture and science — a Soviet "gift" — which still dominates the city centre?

The royal palace is also a good place for lunch — a mountainous plate of Polish charcuterie or a bowl of *zurek* soup, which seems to have a bit of everything in it. Inevitably, eating out is more of a challenge than in a western city. But it is worth seeking

the better restaurants to try the local cuisine, which varies from the robust to the exquisite. I had the best *borscht* ever in the Hotel Bristol.

The Bristol, which played host in its heyday to the likes of Marlene Dietrich and John F. Kennedy, has been renovated

to meet the faxing, brunching and satellite television needs of the 1990s business class. Happily, modernisation has not swept away its brooding, art nouveau ambience.

A day trip to Chopin's birthplace at Zelazowa Wola, an hour or so outside Warsaw, is a less arduous option for the weekend visitor. The composer's father, Nicholas, lived in this small house on the estate of the aristocratic Skarbek family, which is now a museum to Poland's national composer, set in a tranquil park.

I was struck by the reverence that the memorial, where regular piano recitals are held, inspires in the Poles. Chopin, a man of Polish birth who made France his home, is a symbol of their links with the west and their cultural resilience. During the second world war, the Nazis brutally suppressed his music and other expressions of national independence.

On the way, our guide mentioned that his own father had been sent to a concentration camp for three years. A visit to Warsaw is more than a breezy slice of tourism: the ghosts of the Holocaust still whisper from each building. But there is hope around every corner in this strange and seductive city.

WEEKEND BREAK

Warsaw weekend

□ Matthew d'Ancona flew with LOT Polish airlines (071-580-5037). Daily service during the winter, twice daily April-October. Prices from £159.
□ The Hotel Bristol is a member of Exclusive Hotels of the World by Forte. Price: US\$200 (about £140) a night for a single room. Booking through Forte Hotels central reservations (0345 404040).
□ Other hotels: Victoria Intercontinental, from £109 for single room; Holiday Inn, £111; Forum Intercontinental, £61.

A sorry tale of shame, cussedness and sheer vandalism

I am taken to task by Mrs Ingham of Cambridge, who writes to tell me that I have let her down. "You introduce us to your beautiful animals to whom we become attached," she writes. "Could we please have a little updating news sometime?"

The answer is no. In fact, in the light of recent behaviour by many of our farm animals, I can hardly bring myself to speak of them. In every nook and cranny of this farmyard is a creature which, if not hanging its head in shame, should be. Except Alice the Large Black sow. She has every reason to be proud of her latest litter, which was born on Boxing day, but for some reason she clearly wishes they were nothing to do with her. Every time a stranger approaches, she runs to the back of the sty to distance herself from them and give the impression that they might just be some other sow's litter. I blame

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

Cyril, Alice's latest husband. Unlike her previous beaux, he was not a Large Black. In fact, he could not have been more different: he was a Large White. Alice gamely shared the orchard with her flabby pink lover, but since the fruits of their passion came forth, she has come as near to blushing as a black pig can. And well she might. Her piglets are the oddest creatures I've ever seen. I considered what such a mixed marriage might spawn and thought we might end up with spotty piglets, like dalmatians. But these have the markings of pink pigs dipped in ink. And there is no regular pattern to them. Some are pink all over, except for a black bottom. Others are smoky grey, except for a bright pink ear. One

looks like the map of Europe. But it is the shape of their ears which causes me most concern, for I fear they take after their father and have been blessed with upright, pointed ears. Alice's ears, of course, are long and floppy. This puts me at a great disadvantage, for the secret of my success up to now in pig husbandry is entirely due to the pigs' ears covering their eyes. They have not been able to see me coming. This makes feeding easier: they do not mob me, and catching them is less of a race, because I can grab them by the back leg while their sense of smell is still working out where I am. Trouble lies ahead. As for Sage, the white cow, her shame is there for all to see. Having failed to spot the moment when she



comes on heat, I am now getting desperate. I must get her in calf before the time comes for her to leave the yard and go out to grass for the summer. So I have painted her. I took a thick brush and daubed her rear end with a product delightfully called "Tall-Tail". Were it available for human use, I have no doubt it would be used in evidence in nearly every divorce case. Nothing betrays a passionate interlude

like this stuff. It is applied thickly along the cow's back. When she "comes a'bullin'", as they say round here, the other cattle will mount her, the paint rubs off, and the farmer sends for the bull. But I suspect Sage does not like being daubed with bright blue streaks and, being a clever beast, I would not put it past her to have sent the bullock out to buy another tin of the stuff so she could touch up the original paintwork and conceal her amorous moods from me.

If this were not enough, we have recently lived through a night of violence. The two rams, suffering no doubt from a lack of female company since they were taken from the ewes in mid-September, fought and drew blood. I hardly dare to advise the police on dealing with violent delinquents, but they might like to know that I find that throwing mangel-wurzels at the unruly elements brings them to

their senses. And this brings us to the most serious incident, which involves Phoebe, the young sow. I can only describe it as mindless vandalism. Phoebe decided to spend the entire night exercising her energetic snout on the brick wall of the sty.

Pigs have noses of enormous power. I have seen them toss troughs into the air which I have found difficult to lift. Phoebe loosened one brick, then another. Brick after brick cascaded on to the ground. Had Joshua not been available, Phoebe could have seen off the walls of Jericho with no trouble.

So I have that mess to clear up, the rams' wounds to tend, the cow's painted rear to inspect, and an embarrassed sow to cancel. If you wonder, Mrs Ingham, why I do not write of them more often, you have your answer. When I write about seed potatoes, I have at least some illusion of control.



Long term view: Lord Joicey and his son, James, are working to revive their estate with a mix of occupations, some at Heatherslaw water mill (in the background)

The new battle of Flodden

Faced with a dwindling farm income, Lord Joicey is attracting rural craft businesses to his historic estate. Peter Elson reports

When Lord Joicey wanted to change parking arrangements on his estate in Northumberland for visitors to the battlefield of Flodden, a woman appeared claiming that she was the reincarnation of King James IV of Scotland (who was killed in the battle) and would never sleep again if the work went ahead.

For more prosaic reasons the alterations were shelved, but the 15,000-acre estate, set in the beautiful landscape around the villages of Ford and Etal, near Berwick-upon-Tweed, contains a few other surprises of a more worldly sort. Faced with the problems of a dwindling, ageing and isolated rural population and low agricultural returns, Lord Joicey, aged 68, and his eldest son, James, 39, are undertaking a scheme to revitalise the 1,200-strong community.

By attracting small businesses that are compatible with the countryside and run by people with young families, the Joiceys are creating a year-round demand for shops, pubs, a primary school, a post office and regular bus services. The only proviso is that these new businesses are not dependent on the estate or summer visitors.

The estate is also being promoted to tourists, who appreciate the area's history, wildlife and splendid scenery, which changes from lowland pasture to forest and moorland 1,000ft above sea-level. Visitors help the local economy over the tough winter months.

Lord Joicey, the 4th baron, whose family fortunes were based

on Tyneside mining and engineering in the last century, was born and brought up on the estate, which has been in the family since 1907. He took over in 1953, and says: "Originally, we had big, tenanted farms with between 12 and 20 people working on them; now farms are run by one man. Many cottages and barns are not needed."

"Nobody wanted the villages to die, but you need a balanced population to keep the amenities. Income from agriculture is much less than it was. Our ideas evolved gradually, but with conscious planning. The villages are livelier, with more young voices than 30 years ago."

James Joicey moved his wife Harriet, two young children and agricultural translation business from Hampshire 18 months ago to take over the daily management. He says: "Our fundamental philosophy is to keep the communities alive, and I feel I have a responsibility to enhance them. Without us fighting to keep the school open, for example, children would have to travel ten miles.



The Joiceys visit a Victorian day at Lady Waterford Hall

"To survive today you have to know what you are doing, and we are landlords, not shopkeepers. Many people want to move to the countryside, but the new businesses must have good outside markets. Tourism has to work around the farming as I don't want, say, a tractor-mart prevented from parking at his door by visitors' cars."

Any person wanting to start a business on the estate must produce a plan which Lord Joicey's agent, Mark Cuddigan, screens for suitability and viability. He says: "When you open a jampot, other flies soon come to join you, but it's no good if they go bust in a year. There's been only one failure. We

have a 'softly-softly' approach to bringing in new arrivals to sleepy villages, and the newcomers fit in like gloves."

Control by a single landowner means care can be taken that businesses do not overlap. One joiner deals in hardwood furniture, the other in softwood; one nursery specialises in hardy ornamentals, the other in pot plants; one eating place is a restaurant, the other a tearoom. You can rent a bike to explore the country, or hire a horse.

The Ford & Etal Estate is popular for shooting (wild game and partridges) and fishing (sea trout on the river Till, a tributary of the Tweed). Visitors also come to view Flodden Field, scene of Britain's bloodiest battle in 1513 when the English slew at least 10,000 Scots, and lost 5,000 troops themselves.

Others visit Lady Waterford Hall, the Ford village hall, its interior painted with huge biblical murals by Lady Waterford (a pupil of Ruskin), who used local people as her models. In 1972, Lord Joicey restored the magnificent Heatherslaw water mill, a building dating

partly from the 13th century. Although the villages of Ford and Etal are only about three miles apart, tourism was difficult to pull together as the estate lacked a focus: it is like a stately home without a stately home. Etal Manor is Lord Joicey's private residence and not open to the public, while Ford Castle is let to the county council.

The Joiceys called in Networks, a consultancy run by Elizabeth Anderson, who researched and advised on the estate's tourism potential. The most radical advice was the appointment four years ago of a commercial and marketing manager, Fergus Walters.

Lord Joicey says: "My land agent and I struggled in an amateurish way to cope with visitor demands until my son persuaded me to appoint a professional. I had my doubts at first, but it was a good decision."

Over two decades, visitor numbers have increased eightfold to 80,000 and the estate is almost at saturation point. Mr Walters says: "We believe in access to the countryside and single ownership means that we can centrally control things. However, we have to educate people that the countryside is not a park, but a giant food factory."

● Ford & Etal Estate attractions are open mainly from Easter until October. Places such as the thatched Black Bull pub, Etal (Northumberland's only thatched pub), are open all year. Details from Fergus Walters, Estates Office, Ford Village, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 2QA.

Feather report

Sweet melodies of birdland



Woodland drummer: the crowned, male lesser spotted woodpecker

There is a feeling of spring in the woods, with the yellow hazel catkins swinging freely, and the glossy bluebell leaves pushing up through the soil and reflecting the silvery light.

The jackdaws that nest in the old beech trees with ravaged trunks are getting excited. Most of them are paired now, and even as the flock flies away with a chorus of explosive cries, you see that it is loosely broken up into couples. When a pair land on a bare branch at the top of a tree they sit cozily side by side like doves.

Jackdaws like to nest in the deep holes that develop where a branch has been torn off the trunk, and there is a certain amount of fighting going on now over such desirable sites, although they will not start filling them up with sticks until April. They rain sticks down realising the bottom is so far below.

On the Continent, jackdaws are quite common in towns, always flying noisily round the Duomo in Florence, for instance, but here they are rarely seen in London or other large cities.

New sounds in the wood are loud "pee-pee-pee" calls in the treetops. But the calls pose a problem, because they can come either from nuthatches or lesser spotted woodpeckers. It is not easy to distinguish between the calls of the two species, especially as they vary quite a lot: generally, though, the nuthatch's call is more ringing, while the lesser spotted woodpecker's reminds you of the warning signal on some pedestrian crossings — a weaker, slower piping.

Nevertheless, even before you see the tiny birds you may know what you have found. The nuthatch has another common call, a sort of staccato whistling that sounds like a stone being bounced across a frozen pond, and it frequently breaks into this after giving its spring call.

The lesser spotted woodpecker may identify itself in a different way: besides calling, it also drums on the tree trunk, and it is starting to do that now. It is a rather fast, high-pitched drumming and can be mistaken for a branch creaking in the wind.

If you get a glimpse of the caller, you will have no doubt what it is. The nuthatch is a blue bird with a black line through its eye and white and buff underparts, and walks up trunks or under boughs without

even using its stubby tail for support. The lesser spotted woodpecker is striped black and white on the back like a miniature zebra crossing, and the male has a red crown. It keeps its tail pressed to the bark while climbing.

Blue tits are singing in the woodland trees, a few thin notes followed by a trill rather like a pack of cards being flicked. Two of them will go on answering each other from their respective territories for a long time. Pairs are also forming, the male and female chasing and leaping over each other in the twigs with their crests raised.

When they are conspicuous like this, they may fall prey to sparrowhawks, which can see them far away through the bare branches. Sometimes one gets a very good view of a sparrowhawk when, after dashing through the wood, it pauses briefly in a tree to reconnoitre again, leaning forward, bunched, its round wings no sooner closed than they are opened again — and it slips downwards and away.

But what is that strange babbling in the trees on the edge of the wood, where the ploughed field begins? It sounds as if it might be a flock of starlings, but it is more muted and musical, and an individual voice occasionally rises above it with a few loud, fluting notes.

As one gets nearer, a few birds dart away and settle in more distant trees, but the babble goes on — and now one can see many silhouetted shapes in the crowns of the trees, slim, thrush-sized birds with their heads lifted.

They are redwings, close relatives of the song-thrush that have come here for the winter, and are now singing together before they start making their way back to Scandinavia. In ones and twos, the whole flock moves away evasively, but as they go, the creamy eye-stripe and the bright red under the wing can be seen on some of them. They are a sign that down in the Mediterranean, and further south into Africa, our own summer visitors are preparing to come back.

DERWENT MAY

● What's about: Birds — watch out for great crested grebes displaying. Twichers — lesser scaup on Rutland Water. Leisesters — spotted sandpiper at Highbridge. Sonarset. Details from Birdline, 0898 700222.



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Out of the pan, into the packet

Ready-made supermarket pancakes do not compare with the home-made variety.

Robin Young offers his own recipe

Today, the last Saturday before Lent, is Egg Saturday. The pre-Lent carnival romps on after the weekend with Collop Monday (when we should be frying our last bacon for six weeks) and reaches its finale on Shrove Tuesday, when the speciality is, of course, pancakes.

Traditionally, the pancakes were supposed to be cooked by the children, with begged or borrowed ingredients. That, at least, ensured that traditional pancake recipes were sublimely simple, although evidently they are still beyond the abilities and patience of many modern cooks.

The essential ingredients are supposed to be eggs, symbolic of creation; salt or sugar for wholesomeness; flour, for the earth's fruitfulness; and milk for purity. Gateway sell Somerset Batter Mix, which contains all the necessary but eggs and water, and works well if spread very thin.

Nowadays, few people are willing, even if most of the ingredients are mixed for them, to stand at a hot stove top, turning out freshly cooked pancakes one by one. Fewer still have the courage, or skill, to flip them with an adept flick of the wrist so that they spin in the air before returning to the pan without adhering to ceiling, wall, or floor.

So many get ready-made pancakes at a supermarket, where the list of ingredients is likely to be considerably extended. For example, Safeway's American Style Pancakes, new on the shelves this month, contain golden syrup, vegetable oil, soya flour, acid sodium pyrophosphate and sodium bicarbonate, in addition to the items already prescribed. Safeway's Scotch, Raisin & Lemon, and Fruit & Spice (my favourite) introduce, whey powder, diphosphates, citric acid and potassium sorbate, most of which are also in Waitrose's Sultana & Syrup Pancakes, although Tesco's Syrup & Sultana Pancakes (a nice distinction in recipe formulations) eschew the chemicals, insisting upon "unbleached, untreated white flour" and "liquid egg".

The calibre and consistency varies as widely as the recipes. The Safeway American Style are the biggest bore, the size of small reappears but twice as thick, and soft as fresh filter pads. They come with two sachets of "maple-flavour syrup" in every pack of four pancakes, ensuring that someone will drip syrup on the tablecloth while passing a sachet from plate to plate. Maple-flavour syrup is golden syrup with flavourings and caramel.

My other complaint against the Safeway innovation is that the front of the label says nothing about heating. One family member therefore served them cold (so much for

modern culinary competence), and they were horrible. The heating instructions are, in fact, hidden unannounced inside the pack on the reverse of the label and involve toasting the pancake and simmering or microwaving the sauce.

Waitrose, evidently intends its customers to go into Lent in grand style. It suggests the pancakes should be served "toasted with butter or cold topped with clotted cream". Tesco similarly suggests that its Syrup Pancakes are "delicious served hot or cold with jam or cream", while for Syrup & Sultana, and Raisin & Lemon flavour, it suggests "cream or ice-cream". Tesco's says its tastiest effort, Chocolate & Orange Pancakes, is best accompanied with butter.

Pancake tossers, who like to see a creation capable of gracious flight, probably would not deign to recognise as pancakes any of the products mentioned so far. They are more in the doughy, robust style of what I would prefer to call bannocks, griddlecakes or flapjacks.

Most of them would probably survive the Pancake Day Race staged at Olney in Buckinghamshire, even if they were cart wheeled down the street rather than pan-tossed along it, and the smaller calibre Tesco and Safeway offerings would make pretty serviceable ice-hockey pucks or deck quoits if you kept them much past their sell-by date. Over-microwaving them makes them curiously resilient, too.

At Westminster School, the traditional pancake is more durable and less edible than any of these. There the tradition known as the Pancake Gleaze has the school cook tossing a large pancake over a 16ft-high bar in the school's Great Hall, whereupon the assembled scholars "scrimmage" for two minutes to see who can secure the biggest helping. The boy who assembles the heaviest collection of pieces, as weighed on the school laboratory scales, is rewarded with a guinea (modern equivalent, £1.05).

Westminster's keenly contested pancake is believed to be made with plaster of Paris, Polyfilla, or something similar, and bound with horsehair. Nobody suggests trying it for tea.

The supermarket pancakes stand firmly in a well-established tradition of British pan-cookery. It is the glutinous school, whose past masters include Peter Dowdswell, the celebrated human dustbin, who dined 62 six-inch pancakes (battered, with syrup) in under seven minutes in 1977, and Derry Lynch and Dennis Thornton, who, assisted by Nick Cotterell, prepared a 1in-thick pancake, 25ft in diameter and weighing 3,727lb at Cheltenham in Gloucestershire ten years later. They used 5,274 eggs. 92

The smaller calibre offerings would make pretty serviceable deck quoits



gallons of milk, 165lb of cornflour and 14 gallons of oil. The supermarket suppliers' industrial scale operations doubtless dwarf even that effort.

The only food retailer offering prepackaged pancakes in the thin and delicate French style of the classic crêpes is Marks & Spencer, whose Crêpes Suzette, with freshly squeezed orange juice and Grand Marnier sauce, are a well-established best-seller. The pancakes come neatly folded and piled like tawny pocket handkerchiefs, to be heated up in 15 minutes in a conventional oven, or about 1½ minutes in a microwave, and cost £1.59 for four.

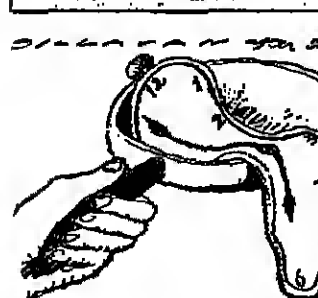
New this year are St Michael Fresh Banana & Toffee Crêpes at the same price. These are similarly folded pancakes with banana slices hidden within, which adds about 30 seconds to the microwaving time. Turn a blind eye to the presence of "Stabiliser E415", which is just a harmless old gum in the gorgeous toffee gloop. If you are taking Lent seriously, try these before you go.

THERE are no fast rules for cooking pancakes. Recipes vary from one in which Paul Bocuse advocates cooking crêpes for three minutes each side to that in which Richard Olney suggests ten seconds on the first side and less on the second. The best advice is to treat the first few pancakes of any batch as experimental, ensuring you have the balance of batter, heat and timing to your liking.

Batter
(serves about 10)
4oz plain flour
½ pt/300ml milk
2 eggs
sugar to taste
½ tsp salt (optional)
1 tsp vegetable oil
butter or oil for frying

Measure the flour into a mixing bowl, make a well in the centre, add about half the milk and stir into a lump-free mix. Add the remaining milk, eggs, sugar, and salt if used, and beat into a smooth batter, the consistency of single cream. Too much beating binds

BIG AND BATTER



the gluten, and can make the pancakes overly resilient. Stir in the oil. Leave the batter to stand for two hours.

Thoroughly heat a frying pan. Stir the batter. It is not necessary to grease a non-stick pan, but others should be wiped over with a piece of cloth or kitchen paper smeared with butter or oil immediately before beginning. Pour a small ladleful of batter (two or three tablespoons depending on the diameter of your chosen pan) and tilt the pan to swirl the mix out to the edges, coating the pan

bottom. Allow about 30 seconds for the crêpe to brown on the underside, then turn it over with a palette knife or a toss, and cook briefly until lightly coloured on the second side. To toss your pancake, hold the pan at chest height and flick upwards while pulling the pan towards you. (Practice makes perfect.)

Stir the batter before making each crêpe, and reheat the pan lightly as necessary. The second side never browns as evenly as the first, so if you are going to fold the pancake do it so the second side is hidden within. As they are cooked, stack the crêpes on a plate, cover and keep warm.

Crêpes which are to be stuffed with spiced fruit, fruit sauces and spreads, or savoury fillings can be made in advance and kept in the freezer, but I prefer to serve them hot from the pan. Dust with icing sugar, and flavour with a squeeze of lemon, orange or other citrus juice. Experiment with other flavourings (spices, liquors, chocolate spread, apricot or strawberry jam, etc) as your mastery develops.

RESTAURANT WATCH

XXXXXX

Resurrected,
refitted,
reprieved and
restructured

AWT FROM NOUGHT

Zoe
3-5 Barrett Street, off St Christopher's Place, London W1 (071-224 1122)
Just as quick as Sir Terence Conran opens new restaurants, Antony Worrall Thompson works miracles raising the dead. After the success of dell 'Ugo in the shell of the failed Baganza in Frith Street, Soho, comes Zoe, successor to Zen Cargo, which sank with all hands after only four months. The principal difference between the large and lively Barrett Street cafe-restaurant and teemingly populous dell 'Ugo is that at Zoe you can still usually get in. In the ground floor cafe you can have two courses for £7.50 and three for £10, lunch or dinner. The chef is Conrad Melling.

FORTESOMETHING

Pavilion
Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London W1 (071-495 2275)
The Forte flagship's Pavilion, transformed after a £350,000 refit into a modern, airy and informal restaurant overlooking Park Lane, this week extends the choices on its £13.50 set lunch to offer five options over three courses. The chef is Sean Davies.

REPRIEVE

Winteringham Fields
Winteringham, Humberside (0724 733096)
Annie and Germain Schwab thought that they would have to sell up because of Mrs Schwab's affliction with rheumatoid arthritis. Popular outcry, in one area of the country that has not let recession put it off its food, prevented them. Instead they have hired Mark Wilkinson as their new chef, and the six-course menu surprise at £38 and four or five-course epicurean at £35 are still going great guns.

A BIRDIE TELLS ME

Wentworth Golf and Country Club
Wentworth Drive, Virginia Water, Surrey (0344 842201)
The innovative Ian McAndrew, formerly of Restaurant 74 in Canterbury and 116 Knightsbridge, has now held out with the Savoy's former general manager, Willi Bauer, at Wentworth, where he is busy restructuring the menus while the management builds the new club house (opening in September). Almost a reason to take up golf.

ROBIN YOUNG

Country parties with taste

ENTERTAINING AT HOME

The Earl and Countess of Bradford



Simple setting: the Bradfords often eat in the conservatory

My wife, Joanne, and I like to be informal. We're not into black-tie dinners or even suit-and-tie dinners. "Come in whenever you feel comfortable in," we tell people, and if someone comes through the door in a tie, I bellow: "Take that bloody tie off..."

Having said that, people in the country are more formal than in London and they do rather like black-tie dinners on a Saturday night. Why are we British so hung up on the way people dress, I wonder? I've seen very smart people in denim and very scruffy people in so-called smart clothes. It's just a perpetuation of social mores, really.

Our house is next door to Weston Park, my old family home in Shropshire, now run by a charity and open to the public. We use Weston for most of our formal entertaining, but at home we just say, "Come and have supper..."

Don't think, though, that this means we're not perfectionists. Being relaxed isn't achieved without a lot of effort. Joanne likes the flowers to be just so, the table to be set beautifully, the cushions plumped up.

We prefer small rather than large dinner parties — the larger the party, the less chance you have to speak to your friends. For a large dinner we use our dining room, where we can seat 12, otherwise we eat in the conservatory.

The other weekend we had 14 people for a buffet Sunday lunch to celebrate our daughter's second birthday and Joanne's father's 70th. There was a whole fillet of beef cooked plain with herbs, accompanied by jacket potatoes and sour cream, plus two big tomatoes and red pepper quiches and a huge ham. After-

wards we had amaretto ice-cream, chocolate mousse and fruit salad. All simple stuff.

Then, in the evening, because we'd had a shooting party, we finished up with a formal dinner for 22 people at Weston Park. You mustn't get the impression, though, this is a normal weekend; not only did we eat too much, it was all too much like hard work.

I always make a point of picking some rather good wines to go with whatever we're having. The Latour '57 went down exceedingly well, and we had three different '75 clarets. The two sensible things I've done in my life are, first, marrying Joanne and, second, when I left university, starting to lay down wine and leaving it laid down. The first wine laid down was in 1970 and, believe it or not, I haven't drunk a single bottle yet.

But, while I think it important to do things well, there's no doubt we Brits have a

take one look and say, "Aaargh", but then they take a bite and say "That's nice". I cook it whole and take it off the bone to serve it. Or we might have salt-fish tuna with jacket potatoes, salad and lots of dry white wine. People love it.

What with four children, a house in London and another in Shropshire, it's not easy to organise a social life. In fact, it's such a juggling act that we end up having dinner parties of our own only about once every three months.

The Countess of Bradford's
lemon meringue pie
typical digestive biscuits
3oz melted butter
2 tins of Nestlé condensed milk
4 whole eggs, separated, and one extra white
juice of 4 lemons and ground rind of one
2tbsp sugar

Crush digestive biscuits and mix with the butter. Press this mixture into the base of a 10in flan dish so that it forms a case, and bake at 190C/375F, gas mark 5, for 10-15 minutes until it's a little brown. Put condensed milk in a bowl and fold in the egg yolks which have been whisked until they are pale yellow. Add grated lemon rind and lemon juice and keep on stirring until the mixture is almost solid. Put on to the biscuit base. Whisk egg whites with sugar until stiff and arrange on top, making little points with a fork. Bake in a medium oven for 5-10 minutes — but keep watching it. When the tips are golden, let it cool and put in fridge. Serve cold with cream.

Interview by Paddy Burt

● The Earl of Bradford is president of the Master Chefs of Great Britain and owner of Porters restaurant in Covent Garden, central London.

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Always a good sign.

كذلك من الأصل

Back to the roots with a crunch

Frances Bissell digs up some vegetables with sweet, crunchy meal appeal



WHY do even the best restaurants in Britain persist in serving those awful, flabby, mangy vegetables? While staying at a country house hotel in Scotland I was looking forward to a gala dinner in which, surely, the local salmon and beef would feature. I was disappointed. Filo pastry swathed everything, and physalis garnished every empty space on the plate. "Seasonal vegetables" turned out to be the ubiquitous limp khaki pod from Guatemala, and the palid spike of baby corn from Thailand. "New" potatoes were simply small imports. Where were the bashed neeps? The parsnips? The homegrown potatoes?

Root vegetables are at their sweet, crunchy best at this time of year. I like to peel and slice them very thinly and use them raw in salads, or as crudites with a dip. Roots prepared in this way, and then dried, can be deep-fried into excellent crisps. Carrots, beetroot, parsnips and celeriac make particularly good crisps.

Roasts, grills and thick stews are perfectly matched with root vegetables, fresh, in season and inexpensive. More versatile than might at first be apparent, root vegetables can be roasted, grilled, stewed or mashed. Some can form the basis for sweet dishes, or soups.

My favourite "mash" is to cook a root vegetable with an equal amount of potatoes and the peeled cloves from a head or two of garlic. I might add a couple of bay leaves, cloves or crushed cardamom pods. Olive oil, butter, milk or soured cream are good mashed into the drained, seasoned vegetables.

Thinly sliced roots can also be used in place of more conventional pastas or pastry; celeriac in place of lasagna sheets, turnip slices to make ravioli, potato and celeriac to make versions of *tarte tatin*.

If you want something more exotic, there are many imported roots now in our markets and supermarkets: yams, taro, eddo, large green oriental radishes, mooli

or white radishes. Some of these are best cooked and mashed, others are delicious raw. The one I like best is the jicama, or yam bean, the sweetest of all the roots. Native to Central America, it can be eaten raw as an appetiser, thinly sliced, dipped in lime juice and dusted with salt and powdered chili. Mix it on a platter with slices of apple and kohlrabi for a light, crisp salad.

Completely different are the comforting, creamy soups you can make from root vegetables. The best version I have had recently was served chilled on Christmas day aboard a British Airways flight.

Melt the butter, or heat the oil in a large saucepan, and sweat the onion until soft. Add the parsnips and stock and cook until the parsnip is soft. Allow to cool slightly before liquidising the soup. Return it to the pan, season to taste and bring to the boil. Serve with a little cream poured on top. Garnish with herbs. If you plan to serve the soup chilled, use oil instead of butter, and check the seasoning just before you serve it. Cold soups need a little more seasoning than hot soups.

HERE is a recipe for using up the pulp after making carrot juice.

Carrot, chili and coriander gratin cakes
(serves 12)
2 free-range eggs
1/2lb/110g flour
1/2lb/140ml milk
4-6oz/110-170g raw carrot pulp or finely grated carrot
1 green chili, seeded and finely chopped
2 spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
a few coriander leaves, shredded
salt, pepper

Make a smooth batter with the eggs, flour and milk and stir in the rest of the ingredients. Heat a griddle or heavy frying pan, greasing it as necessary, and drop soup spoons of the batter on to the hot surface. When the batter is dry on top, turn the cake and cook the other side. File up the cakes on a plate set over a pan of simmering water to keep them warm. Serve with the salmon butter I described two weeks ago, or soured cream and smoked fish.

Beetroot, potato and herring salad with chili cream
(serves 4-6)
4 sheets or 40g gelatine
1pt/570ml beetroot cooking liquor
2tbsp sherry vinegar
4 beetroot, cooked, peeled and diced
1/2-2lb/680-900g small, waxy potatoes
small bunch of dill
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper
1/2pt/140ml whipping cream, whipped
6 roll mops

Soak the gelatine in a little of the

beetroot liquid and, when soft, stir it into the rest of the liquid and the sherry vinegar. Heat gently, stirring until the gelatine has dissolved. Cool as quickly as possible, outside the back door, on a balcony or over a bowl of ice. Wet a ring mould and scatter the beetroot in it. Pour over the cold liquid and refrigerate until set. The jelly can be prepared the day before required.

Scrub and boil the potatoes and, while they are cooking, make the chili cream. Strip the feathery leaves from the stems, which can be put in with the potatoes. Put the leaves in a mortar with a pinch of sea salt and some pepper. Grind with a pestle until you have a paste. Fold this into the whipped cream.

To assemble the salad, turn the jelly out on to a platter. Fill the centre with potato salad mixed with some of the chili cream. Arrange the roll mops on top and garnish with more dill.

There are other ways to serve this combination. The simplest is to dress the chopped beetroot with sherry vinegar and walnut oil and

put it in the bowl. Serve the remaining ingredients, roll mops, potatoes and chili cream in separate bowls, and forget about the jelly.

This is a dish for beer and akavavit rather than wine.

MY mother-in-law remembers her mother, who went to America from St Petersburg, making what her children called a potato pizza. When I visited her last in Pennsylvania, we recreated the recipe, as it sounded so good. It was. Now, whenever I bake bread, I save some dough for the potato cake.

Edith's potato cake
(serves 6)
Dough
1tsp dried yeast
1/2pt/140ml warm water
pinch of sugar
1/2lb/230g strong plain flour
1tsp salt
Topping
1lb/455g potatoes
6oz/170g hard or semi hard cheese, such as red Leicester, Cheddar, Parmesan or Gruyere

With the ingredients, make a smooth, elastic dough. Cover and let it rise in a warm place. While the dough is having its final rising, peel and boil the potatoes and grate the cheese. When the potatoes are soft, drain thoroughly. Mash and season them. Stir in most of the cheese, which will melt in the hot potato. Roll the dough out on a floured worktop and lay it on a large oiled baking sheet or on an oiled griddle. Spread the potato mixture on top and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Bake in a preheated oven at 200C/400F, gas mark 6 for 15-20 minutes, until the top and pastry are a crispy golden brown.

IF you cannot get sweet potatoes from your local shops, you can make this pie with carrots or parsnips, or, of course, pumpkin. I have included the recipe for a biscuit crumb shell as an alternative to short pastry.

Sweet potato pie
(serves 6)
1/2lb/230g ginger nuts or

digestive biscuits
2 free-range egg whites, separated
1/2lb/340g cooked, drained and mashed sweet potato
3-4oz/85-110g light muscovado or Demerara sugar
1tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1tsp ground clove
1tsp ground cinnamon
good pinch of mace
pinch of salt
2 free-range eggs

Reduce the biscuits to crumbs and mix with the white of one egg. Lightly grease a pie dish and line it with this mixture, pressing it to the sides and bottom. Bake for 8-10 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 200C/400F, gas mark 6. Allow to cool. This crust can be made the day before required if convenient. Short crust pastry can, of course, also be used.

Mix the remaining ingredients thoroughly and pour into the baked pie shell. Bake for 40-50 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 200C/400F, gas mark 6.



Spreading vines: from 57 acres in the mid-1970s, Montana now has 300 acres of sauvignon under cultivation at Marlborough, on the South Island

Kiwis have mastered the fruit

Jane MacQuitty celebrates the sudden success of the New Zealand winemakers' sauvignons

Like or loathe New Zealand sauvignon and there are plenty of palates in both camps, it is now world class. Francophiles will not want to know that their beloved Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé, also made from the sauvignon grape, have been matched and often beaten by Kiwi upstarts. But give me the choice between a decent New Zealand sauvignon for under a fiver and supermarket Sancerre at £7 plus, and I know which I would choose.

I am not alone in my growing preference for Kiwi

sauvignon. The United Kingdom continues to be New Zealand's biggest export market by far, taking 65 per cent of the country's exported wine. And last year, British sales of New Zealand sauvignon increased by two thirds on the year before, with the result that there are few high-street chains, or highbrow merchants, without this excellent antipodean bottle listed.

Strange, perhaps, that such demand should have sprung up for a grape variety that often reeks of cat's pee, gooseberries or grass cuttings, and sometimes of all three. But well made, reasonably cropped, ripe sauvignon — and this is where the New Zealand version appears to triumph over the French original — makes a great aperitif, goes well with seafood, fish and white meat, and provides a welcome change to the ubiquitous chardonnay.

While the sauvignon grape is now the third most widely planted variety in New Zealand, after chardonnay and Merlot, Sauvignon, what does seem extraordinary is that the capable Kiwis are making superb, world-class sauvignon wine after just 13 commercial harvests. For although Marlborough made a trial batch of New Zealand sauvignon as early as 1974, Montana was the first to release commercial quantities in 1980.

From the beginning, Marlborough sauvignon, even when compared to those of

France, has obvious European style, class and finesse. Yet the Kiwis took time to realise the export potential.

When I visited New Zealand during the 1984 harvest, I was impressed by the quality of Montana's sauvignon, tasted straight from the tank in the vast Marlborough winery, and 1984 was not even a good vintage there. Admittedly, I also tasted and was bowled over by the quality of Montana's bottled '82 vintage, one of the best sauvignons of the decade. It was this wine, made from Montana's first full yield of sauvignon grapes, and winner of the export award at the 1982 wine show, that put New Zealand, Marlborough and Montana on the world's wine map all at once.

What Montana sauvignon did, and still does, was blaze a

trail for a New World wine country, whose zesty, clean, intense, aromatic and often herbaceous style tends to shine through, regardless of variety, region, or winemakers' contribution. Montana's achievement is all the more remarkable because it is making a great sauvignon in bulk. Having started with just 57 acres of sauvignon vines in the mid-1970s, Montana now has 300 acres planted in sunny, suitable Marlborough, whose green rows of vines, even from the air, stretch as far as the eye can see.

Peter Huber, Montana's managing director and chief winemaker, claims that "good winemaking is all about nuances, little wet things". But even he admits that "Montana's aim has always been to make good wine in vast quantities. We started above the medium-sized line and are still growing."

Montana's lead soon enticed other wineries, mostly smaller boutique-size operations, to Marlborough in the northeast corner of the South Island. The most celebrated is David Hohnen's Cloudy Bay, made by winemaker Kevin Judd. Cloudy Bay's rich, full, more complex sauvignon style, as opposed to Montana's zesty, herbaceous, gooseberry-laden wine, is achieved by adding a dash of semillon to the blend and allowing the wine to partly ferment in cask.

Other consistently great examples of Marlborough sauvignon, and there are plenty to choose from as wineries from all over New Zealand now source their sauvignon grapes from here, include Jackson Estate and Hunter's. The latter's sauvignon tends to fall half way between Montana's crispness and Cloudy Bay's richness and may therefore appeal more to newcomers to Marlborough's distinctive sauvignon style.

Other impressive Marlborough sauvignons we see here include Waipara Springs deep, verdant style and Wairau River's more floral herbaceous style. The good news for Marlborough sauvignon drinkers is that 1991, the year now on sale here, was probably the best the region has ever experienced. As the magnificent Marlborough 1991s are about to be replaced here by the less distinguished but still delicious '92s, my advice is to buy what you can find.

The plot for a spicy book

Recipes that bring a taste of real India to your kitchen

A first book, *The Flavours of Gujarat*, by three cooks working for a Midlands spice company is winning acclaim. Full of easy yet unusual recipes and well illustrated, it's a snip at £6.99.

The idea for the book came from Nareesh Shah, a director of Virani, well known in the Indian community as specialists in 11 different types of flour and unusual spices. But instead of asking a specialist writer, he persuaded his wife, Ranjan, and two colleagues, Sarla Maru and Sandhya Shah, to take on the project.

"People have this idea that Indian food is complicated and takes a long time to prepare, but it's not," Mr Shah says. "We used to get people ringing us up when they bought our products from the corner shop, asking how to use them. For a while we gave out recipes on the phone. Then we put one or two on a word processor and sent them out."

The demand was so great that we thought we might as well do a book."

The three writers collected traditional recipes from family and friends and tested every one. "The recipes had to be vegetarian because none of us eats meat," Mrs Shah says, "but they're exactly as we would cook them in our homes. We gave the recipes to our English friends, who had never done any Indian cooking before. Whatever problems they found we amended. It took a year to get it right."

The key to trouble-free Indian cooking is organisation, Mrs Shah says. "If you have a spice box in which you keep six or seven of the spices you use most you don't have to keep unscrewing and screwing every jar you need, by that time you've burnt the onions."

Other essentials, such as chillies, ginger and garlic, can be kept ready for use if you crush them in a food processor and freeze them in ice-cube trays, she says.

Mr Shah obligingly reveals that spices will keep for a long time. "If you pop them in a



Recipe for success: authors Ranjan Shah and Sarla Maru

in and out of a warm oven you can bring them back to life. Cloves will keep for a few years," he says.

A by-product of *The Flavours of Gujarat* project has been to attract a loyal following from second generation Indian girls. "Nowadays they leave school or college and go straight out to work, so they don't have the time to pick up tips from mum," says Mr Shah. "They may become chartered accountants or solicitors, but they're still expected to know how to cook."

Drop heaped teaspoons of the onion batter into the hot fat (taking care not to make the bhajies too large, otherwise the centre will not cook). Fry a few at a time, turning if necessary for about 5-6 minutes until golden brown. Repeat until all the bhajies are cooked, allowing time for the oil to re-heat between each batch. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve with a selection of chutneys.

Home-made onion bhajies
(serves 8-10)
8oz gram flour
1tbsp rice flour
1tbsp sesame seeds
1tbsp dhana-jeera powder
2tbsp chili powder
1/2tsp turmeric
1tsp salt
2 large onions, cut in half and sliced finely
1tbsp finely chopped coriander
7fl oz water
oil for deep frying

FIONA BECKETT

• The Flavours of Gujarat and a range of flours and spices can be obtained by mail order from Virani, 10-14 Stevens Road, Finsdon Road Industrial Estate, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 4BQ 01933 276629

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How to hit the rain for six

Cricket has come indoors, where it's faster and more fun. Ivo Tennant reports

All over the country, hundreds of schools' sports grounds have been closed by local education authorities and sold to property developers. For many children at comprehensive schools, cricket carried meaning only through television — until they discovered they could play indoors.

Cricket indoors? The very idea would have been scorned by W.G. Grace and the like. In the '90s, it is a godsend for anybody who has no recourse to outdoor facilities, expensive equipment or an entire Saturday afternoon to spare. To the purist, this may be a junk version of the game: to 90,000 others, it is an exhilarating invention.

Indoor cricket began in Australia during the 1970s. Despite the temperate climate, the concept of batting and bowling in something resembling an aircraft hangar was so attractive that by 1989 there were 34 centres in the country. Anybody could play at any hour without risk of injury. There was no hard ball, no bouncers — and not even any sledging (verbal intimidation).

England had originally given cricket to Australia. Now, in the mid-1980s, the old dog was being taught new tricks. People who had never played cricket before were attracted to the game, often as members of teams raised by colleagues at work. Girls went with boyfriends and wives discovered that they, too, could participate. Hitherto, their role at cricket matches had been restricted to providing the teas.

The essence of indoor cricket is that everybody bats and bowls. There is no kicking of heels in the pavilion while someone else spends an eternity at the wicket. It is a game of participation, of speed, of enjoyable laughter — and if MCC is stuffy about it, that is of scant concern to the organisers, the International Cricket Federation (ICF).

The ICF centres — 33 in England, one in Wales — are a world away from Lord's. They tend to be on unprepossessing industrial trading estates, where rents are cheap and buildings are spacious enough to house courts (as they are known), with full-length pitches and the refreshment bars that have helped make this a family sport.

Most centres are in the Midlands

and the North. Bob Manca, the ICF chairman, runs, among others, a centre called Stumps in Birmingham. Last winter, he enlisted Mike Gatting to play for one of his teams, a shrewd move for all parties. Gatting's enthusiasm and ability attracted numerous individuals and the constant practice sharpened his own game, helping him to regain his Test place.

To have played proper cricket is clearly an advantage. Yet at Edmonton, one of only two centres in the London area, the 1,300 players who compete in 13 leagues range from a girl of eight to a 67-year-old retired milkman, and a team of blind players who play with a ball inside a ball.

The centre is owned by Eric Dench, and members pay £6 a year; teams of eight players £32 a game. Balls, bats and soft gloves are provided; several players bring their own. Pads and helmets are not needed, because the yellow ball has a soft filling. Players wear T-shirts, trainers and light trousers.

Whereas proper cricket can take all day — or even five days — an entire game of indoor cricket lasts for just 90 minutes. This is not entirely so that a drink or two can be fitted in afterwards, although that is considered an integral part of the attraction. One team's innings lasts 16 overs, the joy being that even if a batsman is out, he or she continues to bat for four overs.

Two batsmen bat and run on a surface of carpet or Flowtex. If the ball is hit into the side netting, the striker is credited with a run. If it is hit to the back netting, four runs are scored; six if the ball has not bounced. A batsman can be caught off the side and top netting, but not off the back. For any ball bowled above chest height, two runs are awarded to the batsman. Above the court sit the umpire and scorer. Any misconduct and five runs are deducted from the team's score. Further trouble and the offender is sent off.

In a good game, a total of 75 or 80 runs is likely to be a winning score. Sixteen overs a side might not sound a lengthy exertion, but given the continuous action and close proximity of spectators, the players invariably feel drained. A group of England cricketers certainly did two years ago, when they were beaten by a representative team of indoor players.



Square drive: a match in progress at the Red Ball Centre, Sheffield, between a local team and Warrington

Indoor cricket fact box

● **Governing body:** the UK Indoor Cricket Federation, c/o Stumps, Villa Park, Birmingham B6 6HE (021-328 7777). The federation can advise on your nearest centre, on leagues, results service, umpires and rules.

● **Where to play:** there are 34 clubs in Britain. Subscriptions cost about £6 a year and a

team of eight is charged about £32 a game (i.e. about £64 for the two teams). Bats, soft gloves and balls are provided free. Centres can be hired by schools and other groups.

● **Equipment:** T-shirts in your

team's colours, trainer shoes and indoor cricket trousers, which are obtainable from Woodchester Sports, Birmingham, and J. Wilson, West Yorkshire. Hard bats and pads are not needed, because the ball is soft.

● **International tour:** the England indoor team will tour South Africa in April.

MY PERFECT WEEKEND

BARRY NORMAN

Film critic



Where would you go? Dublin. I go there two or three times a year on business, but always mix business with pleasure. The first time I went there must have been around 1980, when I went on Gay Byrne's *The Late Late Show*. That was when I discovered that my programme was actually seen in Ireland.

How would you get there? By Ryanair, a small friendly airline that tries harder, from Stansted. Thanks to Norman Foster's light, elegant design, it is one of those rare airports that makes you feel welcome and comfortable.

Where would you stay? At the Shelbourne Hotel, which, despite some unfortunatous modernisation, retains the grace and charm of a more leisurely age. If the Shelbourne was full, I'd settle happily for the Westbury.

Who would be your perfect companion? My wife, who is as fond of Ireland as I am and is the perfect companion anyway.

What essential piece of clothing would you take? A raincoat. In the confident expectation of a succession of "soft" days.

What medicines would you take? Probably Alka Seltzer, to counteract the damage of Irish hospitality.

What would you have to eat? Oysters and prawns, preferably from the less polluted west coast of Ireland.

What would you have to drink? Draught Guinness — so much better in Ireland than anywhere else.

Which books would you take to read? James Joyce's *Dubliners* and *Ulysses*.

What music would you listen to? Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. This, danced by Fonteyn and Nureyev, was the first ballet I ever saw.

What would you watch on television? The news. I hate to be out of touch.

What film would you watch? None. Don't I see enough of them during the rest of the week?

Would you play any games or sports? No. I'd be too busy talking — or, more likely, listening — to the most articulate and gloriously opinionated race of people I know.

What hobby would you take? None. My needs are simple.

good food, good wine, good company. I'd find them all there. What piece of art would you like to have there? The necklace with the squatting figure of Tutankhamun's tomb — the only thing I have ever been seriously tempted to steal if I could have got away with it.

Who would be your least welcome guest? Margaret Thatcher — but that would apply anywhere.

Which newspapers or journals would you read? *The Times* (particularly for the crossword), *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times*.

What three things would you leave behind? My engagement book, dinner jacket (I hate wearing those things) and the two dogs which, at home, I am obliged to exercise every morning.

What three things would you most like to do? Apart from talking and listening, I would like to dine long and late with friends, and retrace, as far as it is now possible, Stephen Dedalus's journey round Dublin. Our friends always find a new restaurant to take us to every time we go there.

Who would you send a postcard to? My daughters, Samantha, 30, and Emma, 28.

What souvenir would you bring home? A sweater from Club Tricot in Grafton Street.

What would you like to find when you got home? Good news — from whatever source. Ideally, I would like to hear that both my daughters had landed absolutely spectacular jobs.

Interview by

Rosanna Greenstreet

● Barry Norman's latest book, 100 Best Films of the Century, is published by Chapman's, price £16.99.

Tony Dawe finds that virtual reality games are a trial for the over-40s, but his son, Linton, is not so queasy about fighting a computer

Welcome to a nearly real world

Total sensory deprivation was what I thought the bright-eyed boffin said he hoped to achieve. But the sounds of battle raging around me in a dungeon near the Tower of London must have affected my hearing.

My son, who was conducting the interview with more technical skill than me, insisted that he had said "total sensory immersion". That is the aim of virtual reality games, which, according to the boffin and other experts, will boom in 1993.

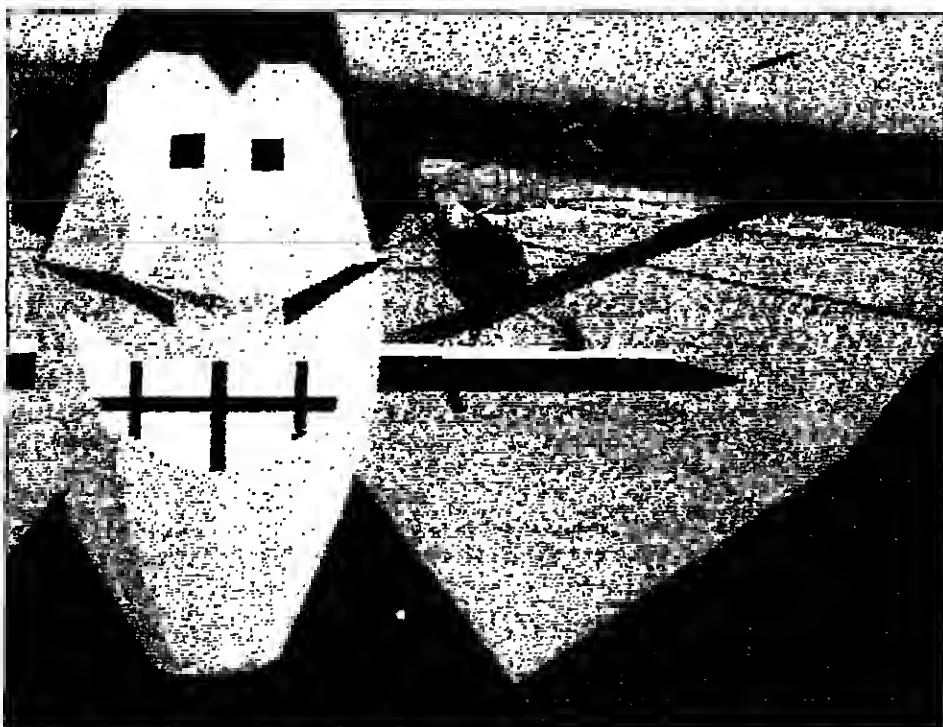
Whether you suffer deprivation or immersion depends largely on your age. For anyone over 40, donning a helmet with its own screens and sounds, strapping a computerised monitor to your waist and being plunged into a world of monsters can seem like a sense-depriving exercise.

But for younger people, especially teenagers, it is the latest experience, successfully achieving what film-makers, computer games specialists and the technical wizards of Disney World have been attempting for years: entering a three-dimensional world where you can experience adventures you could previously only have imagined.

The latest and most sophisticated range of virtual reality games was launched in Nottingham at the beginning of last year. Centres have opened at the Trocadero in London and the Zone in Birmingham, and games can also be found in various seaside resorts.

Virtual Quest, the newest centre to offer the games, has just opened on Tower Hill Terrace, next to the Tower Pageant. Jonathan Waldern, creator of the games and managing director of W Industries of Leicester, which provides them, explains his philosophy.

"Our aim is to make the game so realistic that players become thoroughly immersed in it without getting too frightened or losing control of their senses," he says. "We used the Nottingham centre almost as a research and development facility, and, by having the



Look out behind you: *Flying Aces* simulates an aerial dogfight in the first world war

'Our aim is to make the game so realistic that players become thoroughly immersed without losing their senses'



Identity crisis: players chose their roles in *Legend Quest*

that you can communicate with the other players.

A belt containing a monitoring system is tied around your waist so that the computer can react as you turn your body. The final piece of equipment is a joystick, which acts as your weapon but also holds a small button which you press when you want to move forward.

Thus attired, you are ready to enter the castle, which contains a labyrinth of a hundred rooms full of skeletons, hobgoblins and wolves with which you must do battle to reach your final goal, picking up useful items from treasure chests and the like as you go.

One four-minute game costing £2 will not get you very far and Dr Waldern's hope is that the game will be more than a "one-off" experience for most players. "The idea is that you could come here with a group of friends, play for a few minutes and then go out into the real world to work out what best to do next before playing again," he says.

To help you do this, the Nottingham centre offers a £5 membership, which allows you to borrow a "smart key" that stores your position at the end of each game. At Tower Hill, membership will also buy you the first four-minute game, and you buy more time at 50p a minute.

While the subterranean setting in London reminds you of the dungeons and dragons game which inspired *Legend Quest*, the setting in Nottingham is, of course, a forest. The platforms on which you play the game are moulded into tree trunks which sit in a woodland glade. Suitably-dressed attendants explain the game to newcomers, and you can undertake a two-minute trial for £1, while an extra 50p will buy you five minutes' play at the easiest levels.

The Nottingham centre now has 5,300 members, half of them aged between 11 and 16 and the rest over 16. Needless to say, only a handful are over 40.



Eye contact: headsets provide three-dimensional effects

It's great, but can't we go a bit faster?

The effect from these headsets is incredibly realistic (14-year-old Linton Dawe writes). The liquid crystal screens work well and don't flicker, and the graphics are good. The rooms are full of realistic monsters, cleverly-designed puzzles and other players.

Rather than trying to shoot them, as in other games, the aim here is to co-operate with them, which is more challenging. The headset allows you to move around the game and provides a much better effect than flight simulators and driving simulators. You can even see your hand in front of your face, if you look in the right direction, and the next

development will be the dataglove, which will allow you to "feel" the objects you are seeing. This is the best virtual reality game yet, but it's still not good enough to make you confuse the electronically-simulated world with the real one. Your body movements are limited to turning around rather than going for a walk, and are confined even further by the number of wires connecting you to the system.

One problem is speed: the fact that the system takes even a few hundredths of a second to react to your movements takes it farther from reality, because we are all used to instant reactions from our senses.

Worlds apart

● **London:** Virtual Quest, 2 Tower Hill Terrace, EC3 (071-488 2808). Four stand-up machines for playing *Legend Quest*.

● **Trocadero Centre,** Piccadilly Circus, W1 (071-287 8913). Four stand-up machines for *Dactyl Quest* space adventure in Funland; four sit-down machines for *Flying Aces* first world war dogfight in Lazer Bowl; four sit-down machines for *Exorox* giant robot adventure in Virtuality Centre.

● **Birmingham:** Two *Legend Quest* machines at Gameworks, Arcadian Centre, Hurst Street (021-622 1314). Also one *Flying Aces* machine.

● **Cardiff:** Virtual Reality, Capital Exchange Centre, Queen Street (0222 641089). One Harrier jump-jet combat mission game.

● **Leicester:** Beatties Virtual Reality, The Shires (0533 512697). One *Legend Quest* game.

● **Nottingham:** Legend Quest, Goosegate (0602-242626). Four *Legend Quest* machines.

● **Poole:** Tower Park (0202 715907). One machine.

● **Tyneside:** Metroland, Metrocentre, Gateshead (091-493 2048). One *Flying Aces* machine.

● **Weston-super-Mare:** Olympia Arcade, 23-29 Regent Street (0934 621995). One *Exorox* machine.

Rank Amusements is with drawing machines from various seaside amusement centres to create a Virtual Reality Centre at Chersey Park, Chersey, Surrey, to open later this year.

At a temple in Handsworth, Birmingham, Ruth Gledhill takes part in a service dedicated to the Hindu goddess Durga

Gods appear in flowers and incense



Shree Geeta Bhawan Temple, 107-115 Heathfield Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B19 1HL (021-554 4120)

GENERAL SECRETARY: Kamal Dev Pathak.

SERMON: No sermon at the service. Ruth Gledhill attended, although there is most weeks. Prayers emphasised God as protector and the human need for wisdom, faith and devotion.

ARCHITECTURE: Undistinguished suburban gothic style transformed internally into a world of incense and deities.★★

LITURGY: Based around the worship of the goddess Durga, the universal mother.★★

MUSIC: Enchanting and beautiful renditions of Indian hymns.★★★★

AFTER SERVICE CARE: Guests are invited to stay for tasty Indian food, with jugs of refreshing water.★★★★★

★ stars are awarded up to a maximum of five



Eastern spirit: the interior of the Handsworth temple (left), and Nisha Rishi (above) with her grandmother and the goddess Durga



ON entering the Hindu temple, a converted church in Handsworth, Birmingham, near the scene of the 1985, I was drawn instantly to the white-tiled room in the far left-hand corner of the temple, in what might once have been the porch.

Two beautiful young girls, with long, glossy black hair dressed in ornate, embroidered Indian dress, played with yellow flowers at the foot of a deity with the head of an elephant. This was Lord Ganesha, son of Shiva the destroyer. The scent of incense, which had accompanied the consecration and installation of Ganesha that day, hung heavily in the air.

"Before today he was just a statue made of brass," said Kamal Dev Pathak, the general secretary of the temple. "Now it is not a statue, it is a deity. We believe that God himself is in there now."

I asked my guide, Om Parkash Sharma, president of the National Council of Hindu Temples, to explain the jet black oval stone, the Shiv Ling in the centre of the temple, guarded by a bronze bull, Nandi, the mount of Shiva. "It is the shape of the universe," was all he would say. Looking it up later, in the *Viking Handbook of Living Religions*, it turns out to be a representation of the deity himself, the third in the Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Walking back across the carpeted nave to the temple entrance, before the service began, I was given

bananas and chocolates from a cardboard box overflowing with fruit. These were offerings made to the deities installed in alcoves or on pedestals around the gold, cream and pink temple. Multicoloured flags were stretched from arch to arch, and women, men and children, some barefoot, some with yellow flowers in their hair, sat on the red and gold carpet.

A few men wore western dress but most were in *kurtas*, Hindu casual dress. The Hindu women wore turquoise, pink and gold saris, with the Punjabi in *sarwar* (silk baggy trousers) and cardigans. On the walls were many quotations from the *Bhagavadgita*, one of the most influential Hindu scriptures.

As the service began, a bell was chimed to drive off evil and attract the attention of Durga, the deity we

were there to worship. Durga is the great mother goddess and feminine counterpart of the three male deities.

We sat cross-legged, facing Durga, and were watched over from the right by the deity Krishna, in his incarnation as a shepherd boy with a flute in his arms. Krishna is one of the deities, or *avatars*, of the pre-eminent benevolent god Vishnu, the second in the Hindu trinity.

Like other worshippers, I had removed my shoes and washed my hands before entering the temple for the service. Two priests were responsible for overseeing the correct performance of the ritual and prayers, but they tried to keep a low profile as far as possible. Each week, a different family leads the worship and prepares the food

which the congregation eats after the service.

The temple, built in 1967, was the first in the West Midlands, one of the main centres of Indian immigration. In Birmingham there are about 51,000 people of Indian origin out of an Asian population of 130,000 and a total population of 961,000. In India, Hindus make up four-fifths of the population.

The word Hindu is derived from the Persian word for India. Unlike most religions, Hinduism has no founder and is not prophetic. It has no essential creeds, doctrine, dogma or practice and is often adapted to local conditions. The Hindus I met in Birmingham spoke in monotheistic terms of one God, whom they called Brahma or the Lord of Creation. The temple

deities are the Lord in his various incarnations, explained one, who also spoke reverently of Jesus Christ as the only son of the Lord. But temple literature also challenges Hindus to prevent their children losing their identity by converting to Christianity.

When our prayers began, mostly in Hindi, Durga was hidden behind red velvet curtains. She was being bathed and clothed in a new outfit of red and gold. Offerings of fruit and sweets were made.

The priest invoked the blessings of Ganesha, the son of Shiva, to ensure Shiva's blessing and protection. Then we moved on to Durga. The senior priest, Acharya Dharma Datt Vashishat, recited from the *Durga Sapt Shati* scriptures. The junior priest, Upinder Prohit, performed the rituals.

Mr Sharma translated for me: "He is asking for the protection of all the parts of the body and for all the intellect. He is naming each part of the body. He is saying: 'Goddess who appeared in this form protect me. Protect my eyes, my mouth, my family, protect the whole universe.'"

After the initial prayers, the congregation sang evocative and melodic Indian hymns, or *bhajans*, led by a man with a harmonium, a woman beating a drum and another with a tambourine. While the service appeared casual and informal, it is vital in Hinduism that the rituals are correctly performed. Hindus believe all living things have souls, and that the soul returns repeatedly to different bodies on earth. The type of body you inhabit in your next life depends on *karma*, or the effect of deeds done in the last one.

The cycle of reincarnation is broken when, by spiritual self-realisation, the soul escapes to *moksha*, or liberation. Knowledge and *bhakti*, or devotion, can help free the soul from its earthly imprisonment. Thus devotions well done can lead to the final state of bliss, sometimes called *nirvana*.

The beat strengthened and the pace quickened as we approached the climax of the service, the *aarti* ceremony, or prayer offering. Mr Sharma strode to the front and blew hard on a conch, used as a trumpet during Hindu rituals, to help us concentrate on God. As the unearthly sound echoed around the temple, the velvet curtain drew back. Durga was revealed, resplendent in red and gold silk, dripping with gold jewellery and draped with yellow flowers. We had no sermon, instead there were announcements of forthcoming events, chiefly the festival of Shiva.

We all stood for the offering. The singing recommenced, with clapping and dancing. Worshippers brought food to the goddess and the *aarti*, a silver dish containing five cotton-wool wicks in purified butter, was rotated in a clockwise direction in front of the deity.

The singing grew more intense, the conch was blown again, bells were rung and the priest prayed. We raised our hands as he prayed for world peace and for the whole of mankind.

Durga seemed to smile sweetly on us as we departed for the communal meal in the kitchen next door.

In the lobby, I noticed an Air India poster advertising "Aum Sweet Aum". Hindus speak of *aum* as a primeval sound, representing God in the simplest form. The poster said: "Aum has many meanings. One of them is welcome to the gods."

Prayers, or the *aarti* ceremony, every day for 20 minutes at 11am and 7pm. Tuesday evening worship begins with 15 minutes at 6pm, and 30 minutes from 7.45pm.

Strike call for alley cats

We must have appeared an unlikely team. Julie, my younger sister, Jim, Tim and Andy, three of her friends from Manchester University, my mother and myself had all trooped down to the Bellevue GXsuperbowl, in Manchester, keen to try our hands at a spot of tenpin bowling.

It is boom time in the world of bowling. Based on American models, today's bowling alleys look like a cross between a shopping mall and a cinema foyer — havens of leisure with entertainment enough to occupy a whole day. As well as 32 bowling lanes, our particular joint was jumping with activity: video games, pinball machines, pool tables, burger bars and popcorn and ice-cream stalls.

We made for the saloon doors of the Brooklyn Bar to sup Budweisers and wait for our turn to be called over the Tannoy. When our lane was free, we swapped our shoes for soft-soled pumps and squeaked down to the start. We keyed each player's name into the computerised scoreboard, and we were off.

Julie led the way with a nonchalant hop, skip and roll action. She acquitted herself honourably, knocking down nine pins with her two throws. You have two chances per turn to wipe out a frame of ten pins, and the whole game consists of ten frames each.

I went next and found the first hurdle lay in selecting a ball with the correct weight and finger-hole size. The lads assured me there was no advantage to a heavier ball, so I opted for a puny number seven. I managed to topple eight pins in one, but trying to angle the follow-up shot put me swiftly into the gutter.

Arrow marks on the boards a short way down the lane guide the eye to the centre, but the greatest help is the overhead video screen beside each scoreboard, which has a diagram of the pins to be felled and an arrow indicating the optimum point of impact.

My mother, a first-timer to the bowling alley, was convinced she would be a dab hand at it, having spent her youth curling on frozen ponds

Annie Rankin takes family and friends to try tenpin bowling



Get a grip: weight is less important than wrist action

in Scotland. She was not bad, but, like me, she found that her shots kept veering to the left just as they neared their target. This is not unusual because the first half of each lane is oiled to encourage the balls to glide forward, but after that any angle or spin starts to take effect.

As my ball and the left-hand gutter developed a mutual attraction, Tim stepped in with advice: "Try to keep the swing directly under your shoulder, and release the ball low down." The ideal line of delivery is close to and parallel with your side. But there is, apparently, many a sexist joke about bowling not being a woman's game, as those with ample hips cannot keep to this straight line.

Bouncing the ball is strictly frowned upon, but Andy found it an effective method of scattering his pins. Andy, it transpired, was no novice: he spent last year in America, where he was a part-time bowling mechanic. So we were regaled with anecdotes and points of etiquette. For in-

stance, a double palm-flap and a heavy "Yo!" is the standard recognition of a "strike".

This strike is what we were all aiming for, as it is the term for knocking the whole frame over on the first throw and is marked on screen by a gratifying red cross. With a strike you have the sum of your next two balls added to this score of ten points.

A "spare" is when you topple all ten with two shots and is marked by a red slash; for this you get the score of your next ball added to the ten points. As these carried-over points mount up, to say nothing of doubles, triples or "turkeys" (three successive strikes), the possibilities for big scores grow and grow.

Scoring can, therefore, get fairly complicated, and it was not until the arrival of computerised scoreboards from America in the second half of the 1980s that tenpin bowling started to make a comeback from near extinction in the 1970s. The seedy alleys of yesteryear were revamped with

new technology and swish facilities. Renovation seems to have paid off: the number of centres in Britain has leapt from 45 in 1986 to almost 200 today.

This all-age, all-day activity is now marketed as nice, clean, family fun: there are school and youth club tournaments, "housewives" handicaps and senior citizens' leagues. The British team competes in Europe and is trying to upgrade the game's status. It was even a demonstration sport at the Barcelona Olympics.

"The beauty of tenpin," says Peter Smith of the Tenpin Bowling Association, "is that an eight-year-old can beat his dad. It's a friendly game. It's not about aggressive play but about accuracy and the ability to roll the ball properly."

The atmosphere at Bellevue was certainly friendly, and players from the adjoining lane were eager to give tips. "It's all in the wrist action," the first bloke confided. Then, as I was pondering a more meaty number 12, another chipped in: "The weight doesn't matter, it's what you do with your feet. Lead with the left foot and slide your right foot out behind you." Whether it was the fancy footwork or the hefty number 12 I do not know, but I redeemed myself with my first strike.

By this stage, Jim was steaming ahead and, despite some sneaky foot-faults, his scoreline was peppered with scarlet slashes and crosses. He also managed to pull off a strike in the final round, thus earning an extra turn. The maximum score is 300, but anything above 120 is considered respectable. Luckily, Jim and Andy kept our end up with scores of 141 and 127.

Mother and I came bottom-equal with a meagre 59 points. Perhaps it was those child-bearing hips. Or perhaps today's students just spend too many hours in high-tech leisure traps. Either way, it turned out to be an entertaining evening.

GXsuperbowl, Bellevue, Hyde Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7BA (061-223 4161). 10am-midnight daily. Admission 60p; the game costs £2.70 per player and shoe hire is 60p.

Where to bowl 'em over



- Birmingham: GX Superbowl, Pershore Street, Birmingham B5 4RW (021-666 7525), 32 lanes. 10am-midnight all week. Admission 60p. Games £2.35-£2.75, juniors £2.05-£2.35. Shoes 60p.
- Bournemouth: Superbowl, Glen Fern Road, Bournemouth BH1 2LZ (0202 291717), 26 lanes. 10am-10.30pm all week. Admission 60p (weekends and evenings). Games £3.99 to bowl all day. Weekends adults £3.05, juniors £2.50, including shoe hire.
- Bristol: Superbowl, Brunel Way, Ashton Gate, Bristol BS3 2YZ (0272 221211), 39 lanes. Mon-Sat 10am-10.45pm, Sun 10am-10.15pm. Admission 70p. Games £2.80, juniors £2.30. Shoe hire 70p.
- Cardiff: Superbowl, 376 Newport Road, Cardiff CF3 7AE (0222 461666), 40 lanes. 10am-midnight every day. Admission 70p. Games £2.65, juniors £2.25. Shoe hire 70p.
- Edinburgh: Megabowl, Craig Park, Newcraighall Road, Edinburgh EH15 3RD (031-657 3731), 26 lanes. Mon-Fri 10am-midnight, Sat-Sun 10am-1am. Games £2.10-£3.10, juniors £1.70-£2.50. No admission or shoe-hire charges.
- Glasgow: Hollywood Bowl, Elliot Street, Glasgow G3 (041-248 4478), 32 lanes. 10am-2am all week. Games £1.35-£2.35, juniors £1.30. Shoes 50p.
- Leeds: Leeds Bowl, Meriton Centre, Meriton Way, Leeds LS2 9BT (0532 451781), 30 lanes. 9.30am-1am all week. Games £2.20-£2.75, juniors £1.85-£2.20. Shoe hire 65p.
- Liverpool: Pleasure Island, International Festival Park, Riverside Drive, Otterspool, Liverpool L17 7JH (051-728 7766), 20 lanes. 10am-midnight all week. £2.95-£3.95 admission allows unlimited play.
- London: Megabowl, 142 Streatham Hill, London SW2 4RU (081-671 5021), 36 lanes. 10am-midnight all week. Games £2.20-£3.25, juniors £1.80-£2.35. No admission or shoe-hire charges.
- Manchester: Whitticy Megabowl, Chester Road, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 0RP (061-876 5084), 44 lanes. Mon-Fri 10am-midnight, Sat-Sun 9am-1am. Games £2-£2.75, juniors £1.60-£2.75. No admission or shoe-hire charges.
- Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Newcastle Bowl, Westgate Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4 8RN (091-273 0236), 16 lanes. 10am-midnight all week. Admission: adults 65p, juniors 35p. Games £2.20-£2.70, juniors £1.85-£2.70.
- Preston: Megabowl, Capitol Centre, Walton-le-Dale, Preston (0772 884800), 34 lanes. Mon-Fri 10am-midnight, Sat-Sun 9am-1am. Games £2-£2.90, juniors £1.65-£2.40. No shoe-hire charges.

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Alphabet soup for a wedding breakfast

ANGST For those in doubt a short consultation with a trained counsellor can be arranged via your local branch of Relate (payment by donation). For straightforward nerves, Kalms herbal tranquillisers cost £2.80 from Boots.

BOUQUETS Sonja Waites, director of Pulbrook & Gould (071-730 0030), advises: "Small tied posies look wonderful with the 1990s dresses. The old-fashioned 'flowers over the arm' look (ie, cradled in one arm) is perfect for 1920s dresses. For this, you can use the highly popular white anemone lily. With the riding habit look, try a large tied bunch of roses."

CAKE A best seller for Nicola Easton is her chocolate fudge cake, complete with red icing and edible gold cupid. Colour co-ordinated cakes are in, from £250 for three tiers (081-740 8286).

DESIGNER SHOES Sassy shoes from China, Emma Hope and Jimmy Choo, made to order service, using your own fabric in the shoe's design. Gina, 42 Sloane Street, London SW1 (071-235 1440).

EXPENDITURE The average cost of a wedding in 1993 is estimated by *You and Your Wedding* magazine at £9,140 — a snip compared to that of Mohammed, son of Sheikh Rashid bin Saad al-Maktoum in 1981. It lasted seven days, was held in a purpose-built stadium in Dubai for 20,000

people, cost an estimated £22 million and is still a world record. **FLAUNT IT** Beach weddings abroad are on the up, and now the bridal bikini has arrived. A practical outfit (it does not take up too much room in your suitcase), it is made of pure silk and hand-sewn with shells and pearl beading. Available, made to order, direct from Karen Ashton Design only (0636 702238), from £1,000.

GUIDANCE Watch out for Debra's *Wedding Guide*, published in September by Headline, as a first-edition paperback. Author Jacqueline Llewellyn runs her own bridal consultancy (071-259 6090).

HATS A modern bride's alternative to the traditional head-dress. With the equestrian look of nipped-in riding jacket over full, flowing skirt comes the old-fashioned riding hat (shaped like a top hat) worn with or without a veil. One such ivory silk riding hat with red roseberry trim and 3ft veil costs £162, by Penda (for nearest stockist, ring 0532 461497).

IN-LAWS AT WAR Beware the case of the Whites v the Smiths: bride Angie's parents (Liz and Norman Smith) had agreed to pay £836 to groom Chris White's parents (Cara and David) for laying on the reception food through a company they owned. Liz and Norman Smith later claimed the food was "no better than school dinners" and refused to

pay. Last month they were ordered by the courts to pay the Whites £836 plus costs and interest.

JALOUSIE The ultimate honeymoon destination for 1993, Lord Glenconner's elegant new resort on the Caribbean island of St Lucia stands in 320 acres. Honeymoon packages, including private picnics and candlelit dinners, are offered at no extra charge. Silk Cut Travel offers six nights all inclusive at Jalousie from £1,181 (0730 265211).

KERFUFFLE Overexcited pages and bridesmaids cause havoc in the aisle. Follow *The Bride* is a children's story book which prepares them for the big day. Available by mail order from Elaine Drake Lynlyan, Potbain, Achillishole, Ulspool V26 2YW (£4.75 including postage).

LIST A wedding list at Tiffany's need not cripple your friends financially, with champagne glasses starting at £10 and china plates from £25. As part of this new service, it will keep your list open for two years for other special occasions. (071-409 2790).

MEN ONLY Upstairs at Michaeljohn in the Men's Treatment Room, the stressed-out groom-to-be can indulge himself in the Luxury Top to Toe package: manicure and pedicure, half hour sunbed session, one hour grooming (body scrub) and massage, one hour facial and a can and blow dry. It lasts four and a



Ready to wear: Florio has ten exclusive Hardy Amies designs

half hours and costs £145 (from the Ragdale Clinic at Michaeljohn hairdressing, 071-409 2956).

NEW Buzz words in dress designs for 1993 include: the Princess

line (as chosen by Lady Helen Windsor last year), in panels with a flared skirt and no seam at the waist, and the Empress line (flared from below the bust). Favoured

fabrics for the designer bride are Thai silk, tulle and flowing chiffon.

OUTRIDERS For attention-seeking brides, American-style outriders to escort the wedding car to the church cost from £185 per bike and rider. Contact Fleetwood Classic Limousines (071-624 0869).

PYROTECHNICS Light up the sky with a good-luck message for the happy couple for a burning heart between their initials. Pains Fireworks have a range of fireworks finales, starting at £80. (0794 884040 for stockists).

QUEEN'S COUTURIER New for spring 1993: Hardy Amies' range of ten ready-to-wear wedding dresses, exclusively for Florio, from £1,295 to £2,395. Florio Bridal Designs, 3 Motcomb Street, London W1X 8JU (071-245 6564).

RINGS Minimalist chic from Carlier in the form of Ellipse rings. A plain bangle-shaped ring in yellow, white or pink gold costs £600. (Gem-set with a sapphire or ruby, costing £915 and £1,450 respectively.) For stockists call 071-493 6962.

SCOTLAND In Scotland a couple can marry anywhere — at the top of a mountain or in a hotel — if a minister is present. The proclamation of banns is no longer necessary, and you don't have to be a resident to marry there. Further information from General Register Office, New Register House, West Register Street, Edinburgh EH1 3YT (031-334 0380).

TASTE Sarah Appleyard of The Admiral Crichon, party designers, reports: "People are trying to keep things very simple and not look as though they're spending lots of dosh. We've done marriages with no flowers whatsoever in them, just lots of topiary trees instead. They look dramatic but not over the top."

UNDERWEAR The ultimate luxury of made-to-measure underwear

is available at Rigby & Peller (071-589 9293). Experts in corsetry, they can also assist the bride in the last minute battle of the bulge.

VENUE Second-diners marrying at a register office can compensate with a church venue for the reception. The Amadeus Centre is a converted Welsh Victorian chapel in London's Maida Vale. The upper hall accommodates 60, and the crypt-like lower hall with its vaulted ceiling makes an atmospheric dance area. (071-286 1086)

WILD WAISTCOATS Tom Gilbey's Waistcoat Gallery offers off-the-peg and made-to-order designs costing from £270 to £325. A current favourite with fashion-conscious grooms is the Regency cut waistcoat in tapestry fabric.

XENOPHILES Running off to the sun, in particular the Caribbean, to get married is increasing. A popular last year Thomson sent over 2,000 wedding couples overseas. Companies offering wedding packages include African Safari Club (0279 465846), Cosmos (061-480 3929), Kuoni (0306 740500), Thomson (071-431 2077) and Virgin Holidays (0293 017181).

YOU AND YOUR WEDDING LIVE! If you live in or near London, it is not too late to make it along to this exhibition today at the New Cornmarket Rooms, Great Queen Street, Covent Garden, WC2. Everything from cakes to flowers, make-up demos to fashion shows, with an opportunity to meet the designers afterwards. The £14.50 tickets include a light meal.

ZOOLOG With the date, place and, if possible, time of birth of each partner, consultant astrologer Robert Curry can produce a ten-page "compatibility profile" for £20. (The Astrology Shop, 071-497 1001)

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Going private: Mrs Hobhouse in the National Trust garden at Tintinhull in Somerset

Penelope Hobhouse, one of Britain's most influential gardeners, who is uprooting from the National Trust's Tintinhull after 14 years, describes the plans behind the garden she is creating at her new home in west Dorset

At the end of this year I am moving house, and to a garden which I am making for myself. Except for an enclosed walled area — heavy clay soil in an old kitchen garden that hasn't been worked for years — on one side of the house and an incomparable view of the hills of west Dorset on the other, there is nothing there no trees, hedges, flowerbeds. This may sound thrilling but, considering that much of my livelihood comes from designing gardens for other people, it is proving surprisingly daunting.

Although I have an unspoilt canvas to work on, really a designer's dream site, I have a problem: I don't know how I shall enjoy becoming "private" after more than 20 years of being "open" to visitors. By November, I will have lived at Tintinhull in Somerset, as custodian for the National Trust, for 14 years.

The public are a constant spur to further effort: they are encouraging and sometimes damping, critical, observant. They also become friends, and I shall miss them. I sometimes think that, here at Tintinhull, my husband, John Malins, who died last August, and myself garden for "approval". Without the visitors and the watchful eye of the NT maybe I won't want to garden at all.

However, of one thing I am certain: that without a creative interest in gardening, I would have found the six months since John died even more difficult. Fortunately, we shared this fanaticism for gardening, and going ahead with the plans for the new garden that we had discussed together has been life-saving. Having to work as if I were doing it for him seems to have kept me well and sane.

At any time, gardening, whether labouring or thinking and planning, seems to be curative. It is often said that the satisfaction of growing things gives gardening an edge over more sterile recreations. For me it is therapeutic, because I become so completely absorbed in what I am doing, I find the spit and polish

of gardening compelling. I love the physical exercise, the fresh air, weeding, the smell of grass and flowers, producing and planting. Then, tired with that, I enjoy the challenge of the more cerebral side of it all.

Perhaps it is rewarding because you cannot ever achieve perfection, and the garden is never finished. You do not have to be a good

and private level, or it can become a profession, so that gardening efforts — in the shape of a garden open to visitors, in writing and in design work — depend on the appreciation of others.

Often, the dividing line between private and professional gardening is crossed almost by chance, as it was for me. Also, given reasonable physical

comes before or afterwards: reading is an essential part of gardening. Technical and reference books help you with skills, but the history books and books about the aesthetics of gardening should always be within easy reach.

It is essential to absorb other people's opinions and to visit good gardens: sometimes they stimulate disagreement but more often they consolidate and clarify one's own gardening ethos. Sir George Sitwell's *On the Making of Gardens*, read 20 years ago, was seminal for me, as was Sylvia Crowe's *Garden Design*, and Russell Page's *The Education of a Gardener*.

Not surprisingly, given my years at Tintinhull, I have a penchant for the rhythms found in a classic Italian garden. Research for writing concentrates the mind wonderfully, just as advising other people on their gardens makes one's approach more disciplined. I am lucky to be both writer and designer.

Tintinhull, designed by the talented Phyllis Reiss in the 1940s and 1950s, is a magical garden. Its layout is essentially geometric and formal, with a series of enclosed "rooms" linked by paths and axial views. The planting themes, by contrast, are romantically informal, with beds and borders packed with interweaving shrubs and perennials. The verticals in the garden — trees, topiary and hedges — divide the space and give each section a feeling of secrecy and mystery.

Most of the features of my new garden are inspired by something at Tintinhull: a water canal, an arbour of clipped bay, secluded places to sit, cross axial pathways.

This spring, the first essential is to lay out the bones by getting in trees, paths and hedges. Most of the trees will have a domestic connotation — medium-sized crabs and thorns — while the hedges will split up the open spaces.

Garden and house are inextricably linked, as we made the design for the garden when we applied for planning permission to make the buildings habitable. Now, as planting begins and paths are laid out, the plan has to be fine-tuned.

The ruin we have converted was an early 19th-century coach house, attached to a walled kitchen garden. The adjacent cow byre, a lean-to against the outer garden wall, is now the drawing-room.

The front of the building faces approximately north into open country, the back opens into the abandoned garden to the south. This gives two separate gardens, to be linked by views through wide glass doors in the central hall.

Conical yews form an avenue running either side of the front and back. Avenue sounds rather grand, but does describe what is being planted; although the scale is small, there are four pairs of clipped yew shapes north and south of the house, and these set the style of the whole garden.

Our plan is very straightforward. The northern avenue of yew in the paddock is supplemented by outer rows of mulberries; with the yew these will frame and narrow the open views; further alleys of thorn complete a *patte d'oie* and hornbeam hedges are to make patterns to contain shaggy wild flower meadows. These are to be cut as seldom as possible, but the main yew vista will be mown regularly.

In the inner garden, the yews, also in grass, will flank a narrow water channel — more like the Generalife than Versailles — and converge on a seat and arbour under the far wall. On either side, hedges of evergreen oak hide the rest of the garden planting. Each pathway will be lined with hedges or trees to give a formal effect, views carefully aligned with doors or windows.

The detailed planting is still on the drawing-board; the Tintinhull influence is strong, but for the actual colours I will strike out on my own, with more sober greens, blues and golden foliage beds, less self-conscious colour manicuring in a garden in which I have only to please myself.

Francesca Greenoak, page 14



Top, Tintinhull House and, above, the beautiful formal pool that has inspired Mrs Hobhouse in her new garden design

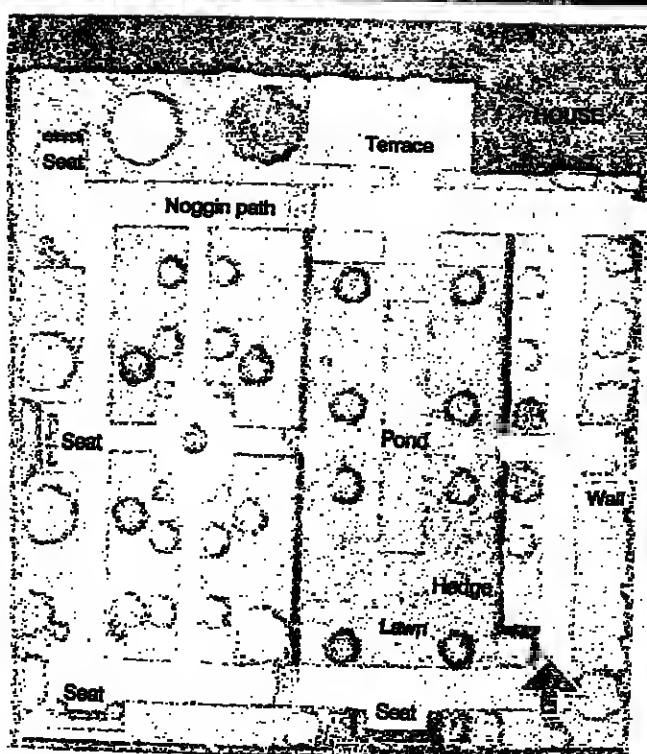
gardener to take advantage of the healing powers of gardening, only to be a striver.

Of grand passions, gardening seems to be one of the most satisfactory and least dangerous, unless you include the possibility of becoming a bore on the subject. It can be done alone or in partnership, at almost any age and at comparatively little cost — that is, if you compare it to owning yachts or foxhunting. As an occupation it can be pursued on a personal

health and a bit of luck, it should be possible to potter in the garden to a ripe old age.

As I get older, the overall picture, has become more important to me than individual plants. Digging and planting is a bit like learning a grammar: once you have learnt it, it becomes automatic; you just get on with the job and your mind is free for other thoughts. Plants become the means to compose your pictures.

The intellectual stimulus



Top, looking from the walled garden along the partially prepared path towards the restored house; above, Mrs Hobhouse's design for the walled garden, incorporating the formal pool (the arrow shows the spot from where the top photograph was taken). Right above, the view from Bettiscombe before planting; right below, looking north towards the walled garden before clearance

From left, Danielle (aged 13) in shirt, £13.99, and blue shirt, £23.99

and blue shirt, £23.99

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THEATRE: The first night of a new production at the National; and a Michael Frayn revival in Sheffield

A trip too often to the Wells

Pinero may not have been Wilde, and his *Trelawny* not *The Importance of Being Earnest*; but both have the power to charm and amuse. Did not even Shaw, the mortal enemy of the great white father of late-Victorian "society drama", declare that his backstage comedy had "a certain delicacy which makes me loth to lay my critical fingers on it"?

That is why I do not feel, as some clearly do, that the arrival of a second *Trelawny* on the South Bank within days of a first one closing on Shaftesbury Avenue is as disgraceful as a Royal Shakespeare Company revival of *Which Witch*. Indeed, I expected the National to teach the West End a lesson in fluency and sophistication.

That does not fully happen. If the production at the Comedy was bright and brittle, and sometimes gave the impression that Pinero's family of thespians had not been introduced to each other, John Caird's revival seems slow and even laborious. Part of the fault may belong to a playwright who could be awfully painstaking when it came to setting up situations. But that hardly excuses a first act whose sentimental merriment is supposed to be in marked contrast to the

Trelawny of the Wells

wintry happenings of the second. Here, the comparison between theatrical exuberance and Mayfair frigidity might be one between January and February.

The first-act party is for Rose Trelawny, flower of the mid-Victorian theatre, who is leaving Sadlers Wells to marry the nob Arthur Gower. Then John Napier's cosy parlour disappears, and on slumps the glacial tableau he has designed for the second act. Arthur's grandfather and great-aunt snoozing beneath fluted columns while all else perches in awed silence. With Robin Bailey adding a menacing edge to bleats and wails rather similar to those Michael Hordern brought to the role of the tyrannical Sir William Gower, and Helen McCrory's Rose seething in furious protest, the scene is more plausible than at the Comedy. Yet it too tends to drag.

Things look up after the interval, when a disillusioned Rose returns to the Wells, a rejected Arthur runs off to become an apprentice actor, and reconciliation occurs during the first rehearsal of a new play by

their friend, Tom Wrench; but not as much as the talent on display promises. After all, here is Michael Bryant comically flaunting himself as a ham actor, Nicola Redmond exuding callow grandeur as an actress on the make, and Adam Kotz flinging about in frustration as Wrench, the character Pinero based on the pioneer of "cup-and-saucer" realism, T.W. Robertson. Above all, here's a fine performance from the little-known Helen McCrory: a Trelawny who moves from joy to restless exasperation, from triumphant confidence to unostentatious grief, with an emotional authenticity that makes Sarah Brightman at the Comedy look a pretty artificial Rose.

What is wrong? Is the Olivier too forbidding a space for so genial an exercise in theatrical nostalgia? Or has Caird, who directed so many good things for the RSC, brought some of that company's more questionable traits to the National, notably a tendency rather earnestly to look for sub-text and depth in places where they are as elusive as diamonds in a sandpit? Whatever the answer, it will take a third revival to get *Trelawny* right.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Trelawny of the National: Helen McCrory — a new and spectacularly blossoming Rose — Nicola Redmond and Adam Kotz

An artifice in ivory

Donkeys' Years

Crucible, Sheffield

IT IS nearly two decades since Michael Frayn's comedy about an Oxbridge college reunion first delighted audiences and won awards. Its combination of character burlesque and farcical situations looks forward to the delirious joy of *Noises Off*. Michael Rudman, an old hand with the play, now directs it on his new patch at Sheffield; and it must be said that 18 years on, the comedy betrays a certain mechanical flatness.

The production is discreetly in period, to judge by the men's subtly flared trousers and the dialogue anticipating the end of the century in 20 years' time. This gives a due to the uncase that both style and substance generate. Is it a period piece or not? There is no reason why the high jinks

of a mainly privileged Oxbridge world should seem dated. Oxbridge still exists, and still somehow confers privilege on its acolytes by mere contact. But there seems something very heartless in the mockery of the frightful little prole, derided for his greyness and his accent. Heartless and inaccurate. Such people can end up as prime ministers.

The militant young don who supports the college staff's industrial action arouses an almost romantic nostalgia. Today his ruthlessly managerial counterpart would have very different priorities. Conversely, the cabinet minister's gibbering panic at the threat of a sexual scandal, which might destroy him and the government and the pound, has an added edge — given the recent preoccupations, and the power of the press — that kills the joke stone dead.

If the play's social assumptions seem almost comically innocent, Frayn's ear for the absurdities of polite conversation remains as sharp as ever. The opening scene charts the

arrivals of college members for a reunion after 20 years. Contemporaries of varying abilities and temperaments skirt one another with wary geniality, uttering those wonderfully meaningless platitudes with which the British paw the ground, mark time and sniff each other out.

There is a danger that viewed from the new egalitarian society, the punting classes blur into an unvaried upper-class caricature. If memory serves, the original cast offered more differentiated characterisations, though Sheffield gets off to a good start with Simon Williams and Nicky Henson.

Two expert comic actors, they play together as ministerial smoothie and successful surgeon with snap, style and obvious pleasure. Give them 20 more years and then Pinter's *No Man's Land*.

The director distances the play from us by going for stylised and sometimes — as with Phil Fox's whooping camp clergyman — broad performances. Alison Fiske, as the undergraduate pin-up turned titled pillar of respectability, has warmth and vulnerability where the original, Penelope Keith, had comic fluster. Her shorter stature makes her assumption of two male disguises in the frenzied climax of chase, concealment and confused identities, look very artificial indeed.

MARTIN HOYLE

RECORD REVIEWS: Sounds of the Seventies updated, five albums of Richter, and the latest Lou Rawls project

Turning back the decades in style

So far, the notion that the 1990s are turning into a rerun of the 1970s has produced plenty of laughs but little of substance. We have seen Rolf Harris gingering up "Stairway to Heaven" with his wobble-board on *Top of the Pops*, Erasure pretending to be Abba, and girls in ludicrously flared trousers, that sort of thing. But not much to trouble the rock analysts of the future when they look back with a view to chronicling the development of serious musical trends.

Now, with the release of an outstanding debut by The Auteurs, there is, at last, an album which takes its inspiration from the 1970s yet boasts a vision and intrinsic merit that bears comparison with the best music of any decade.

Audaciously titled *New Wave* (Hul Recordings HUT77), it creates a quasi-fantasy world of the sort in which Bowie's Ziggy Stardust used to exist. Dotted with references to stars, satellites, stardust and even a stardchild, the songs offer a rogues' gallery of characters — a

showgirl bride, a housebreaker, a murderous valet, a pair of idiot brothers — all sprung like strange genies from the imagination of singer, songwriter and guitarist Luke Haines.

Haines, who used to play in a group called the Servants,

The Auteurs have developed considerably in just a year

started the Auteurs with bassist Alice Readman and drummer Glenn Collins little more than a year ago. Their development since seems unnaturally rapid these days. But then Haines clearly has a natural gift for producing heart-tugging melodies which he sings in a quavery English voice directly descended from that of Ray Davies of the Kinks.

The Auteurs toured with

Suede last year, and while the Auteurs' music is of a more delicate and melodic persuasion, if there is to be a palace revolution of 1970s-influenced music, then this album unquestionably qualifies them to play the role of the Clash to Suede's Sex Pistols.

In contrast to the free-flowing, romantic spirit of *New Wave*, there is a smug, calculated tone to Saint Etienne's new album, *So Tough* (Heavenly HVNLP6). Reaching the shortlist of last year's Mercury Music Prize with their 1991 album *For Base Alpha* has clearly not curbed the trio's appetite for fluffy pop themes wrapped in packages that are too artfully knowing for their own good.

Saint Etienne have been called "electro-bedsit futurists", which means that they play clever but ultimately soppy pop songs while indulging a magpie mentality to the hilt, plundering snippets of speech from movies and documentaries and throwing in the odd sound effect of loopy guitar phrase to reaffirm their position near the cutting edge.



The Auteurs: a debut album to compare with any

Singer Sarah Cracknell has a seductive voice, and once the artifice is peeled away there are some attractive melodies. "Junk the Morgue" has a beautiful lull, and "Calico" splices an Eastern-sounding

chant and an eerie rap by guest lyricist Q-Tee with real panache. But too often their songs are vehicles for striking an emotionally sterile pose.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Raw live show of deep blues

JAZZ

Horn arrangements by Benny Golson and Hank Crawford, and guest appearances by Lionel Hampton, Plas Johnson and Buddy Guy among others: Lou Rawls has no shortage of high-calibre musicians supporting him on his new project. A consummate performer who has made all too few appearances in this country recently, he has found it difficult to reproduce the raw energy of his live shows when he enters the studio. *Portrait of the Blues* (Manhattan 799548-2) makes a deeper impression than either of his recent Blue Note outings.

With Steve Khan's guitar growling in the background, Rawls makes a swaggering entrance on "I Just Want to Make Love to You", one of two Willie Dixon numbers. A duet with Phoebe Snow on "A Lover's Question" never quite catches fire, and Hampton's fleet contribution to "Saturday Night Fish Fry" is routine enough, but Rawls soon gets back on course with the help of Golson and Crawford's charts. His voice has lost none of its velvet sheen. He is at his most compelling when he is not forced to compete with a heavy backbeat. There are times when you cannot help thinking that all he really needs

behind him is a quiet, unobtrusive trio.

After mixed results with an overbearing fusion trio, Michael Petrucci goes solo on *Promenades with Duke* (Blue Note 780S902), in which Ellington themes are dissected with microscopic precision. The variations are inexhaustibly inventive, particularly in the recasting of the skeletal melody of "African Flower".

Yet as with Joe Henderson's acclaimed set of Billy Strayhorn tunes last year, the romantic essence of the originals often goes untapped. Ellington's fans may well feel that the master did it all with rather more wit and economy on *Piano Reflections*.

Petrucci's best work to date can be found on *Power of Three*, a 1986 collaboration with Wayne Shorter and the guitarist Jim Hall. Among rousicians, Hall enjoys a formidable reputation as an accompanist who stays two or three steps ahead of his partners in any situation.

All Hall's skills are on display in *Live at Village West* (Concord CCD-4245) an enchanting low-key series of duets with the bassist Ron Carter, taped in 1982. The dialogue seldom falters, and best of all neither man feels obliged to fill the silence simply for the sake of it.

CLIVE DAVIS

One inspired man and his piano

Needless to say, Decca's five new Svyatoslav Richter releases are gems: invaluable documents giving insight into the work of one of the great pianists, who yet has recorded comparatively little of the solo repertoire. Their provenance varies: most are live performances.

Volume One, a double album that preserves a concert Richter gave in February 1989 at the Yamaha Hall in Vienna (Decca 436 451-2), sounds rather as though it was taped on a sub-standard Walkman (though the recording is digitised by some naughty fellow in the twentieth row, creaks and coughs abound, and the piano seems distant. No matter, for once accustomed to the ambience and to a piano that sometimes sounds in need of loving care and attention, the listener can

without difficulty discern an utterly majestic recital.

The second disc is particularly impressive: a delicate but rich-toned reading of Webern's *Variations*, Op. 27, a bristling one of Bartók's *Three Burlesques*, suitably exotic intoxicating accounts of two pieces from *Szymanowski's Metopes* (*Le des Sirenes* and *Calyssos*), and Hindemith's unexpectedly powerful *Suite of 1922*, with its pugnacious final Ragtime and its resonances of the America of the day. The first disc is devoted to Russian composers: Prokofiev's *Second Sonata*, Op. 14, vigorous and dramatic and in its slow movement dark and disturbed and restless; Stravinsky's *Piano-Rag-Music*, surprisingly heavily weighted, and a matching pair of Shostakovich's *Preludes* and *Fugues*, the F flat major and

the restrained but enormous C minor. This last piece demonstrates as well as anything Richter's marvellous grasp of architecture. He, more than any other pianist, sees a piece as a complete shape; the end is implicit in the beginning.

The remaining four issues — all single discs — are mostly taken from a series of concerts that Richter gave in the Teatro dal Bibbiena, Mantova, in 1986 and 1987, sometimes turning up as scheduled, sometimes not, typically keeping everyone — and especially the Decca team — on tenterhooks until he felt like playing.

Two discs are given over entirely to sonatas by Haydn (Decca 436 454-2 and 436 455-2). Parts of the second of these, *Sonatas 24 32* and

46, seem to have been made during a thunderstorm: *Sonata No 2* is accompanied by some fierce rumbles and the sound of torrential rain beating on the roof. Presumably Decca was not responsible for originating the recording, for it is analogue even though it dates from 1986, and no location is specified. But on both discs — the other includes *Sonatas 40, 41, 44, 48* and *52* — Richter's playing brings out all the colour and imagination in these works, which offer an unprecedented variety of ideas and moods. Richter, of course, understands this well; sheer instinct and the unrivalled clarity of his fingerwork and tone colours bring him closer to 18th-century style than one might think.

One of the remaining two discs (436 456-2) is devoted to Schumann: the *Four Fugues*,

Op. 72 (where the cerebral textures are made wondrously transparent), the G minor *March* from Op. 76, the Op. 7 *Toccata*, *Blumenstück*, Op. 19 and *Nachtsstücke*, Op. 23. The other gives us Brahms's stormy *Sonatas*, Op. 1 and 2 (436 457-2). On both Richter balances poetry and virtuosity to perfection. He understands the mysterious interplay between harmony and melody in Schumann, and he shapes phrases lovingly. Meanwhile he relishes the extravagant passions of Brahms as much as its warmth, turning both of these vast organisms into coherent and thoroughly convincing pieces.

We have to put up with applause here and there, but in the face of such a towering art this is no sacrifice.

STEPHEN PETTITT

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The book they're all talking about

"Hollywood, in its obsession with ugliness, has developed a surprising and self-destructive hostility to heroes. Instead, the industry seems gripped by a curious compulsion to provide us with characters who display all the charm and nobility of poisonous snakes..."

A further exclusive extract from *Hollywood vs America* — in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

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27 FEBRUARY
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ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
Covent Garden

BBC1

7.25 News and weather (3054223)
 7.30 Henry's Cat. Feline fun (7) (6518117) 7.35 Wiz Bang. Early-morning antics (s) (7052001) 7.50 Lill' Bits. Cartoon adventures of the lovable pines (s) (7052001) 8.10 Eggs 'n' Bacon. Cheryl Baker visits Billingsgate market (s) (5561204) 8.35 Tom and Jerry. Triple cartoon bill with the duelling duo (1057575)
 9.00 Going Live! Sarah Greene and Philip Schofield are joined by Right Said Fred, Louise Loring, Noel Edmonds and Michaela Strachan (s) (7835488) 12.12 Weather (909198)
 12.15 Grandstand introduced by Steve Rider. The line-up includes (subject to alteration): 12.20 Football Focus: A look back at the week in which England, Scotland and Northern Ireland were all involved in World Cup qualifying matches; 12.55, 1.25 and 1.55 Racing from Cheltenham: Persian War Premier Novices' Hurdle (1.00), Mitsubishi Shogun Trophy Chase (1.30), Allright Bitter Hurdle (2.00); 1.10 News; 1.15, 1.40 and 2.10 Rugby Union: Live coverage from Murrayfield of the international between Scotland and Wales; 4.00 highlights of Ireland v France; Northern Ireland: 2.10 live coverage of Ireland v France; 4.10 highlights of Scotland v Wales; 4.35 Final Score (2570444)
 5.15 News with Chris Lowe. Weather (1387223)
 5.25 Regional news and sport (2514136). Wales (to 6.05) Wales on Saturday



Outzipping celebrities on entertainment: Mike Smith (5.35pm)

5.35 That's Showbusiness. John Thomson and John Leslie take on Ann Bryson and Kenneth Connor in the celebrity quiz show presented by Mike Smith (5.35pm)
 6.05 Noel's House Party. Noel Edmonds's victims include Lynn Faulds Wood, John Stapleton and Nick Gillingham (s) (729852)
 7.00 The Paul Daniels Magic Show. The magician is joined by French Canadian balancing act Vis Versa and Swedish surgeon and card star Lennart Green. (Ceefax) (s) (109952)
 7.50 Casualty: No Cause for Concern. Keeping Holby's casualty department busy tonight are two teenagers who steal a scooter and carrying radioactive isotopes; and the first officer of a cargo ship, injured when trying to rescue a seaman overcome by lures. (Ceefax) (s) (601223)
 8.40 Birds of a Feather: Cheek! Paula Quirke and Linda Robson star as the wisecracking Essex girls adjusting to life without their husbands. Tracey spends the evening in the company of Doran's husband (s). (Ceefax) (s) (900575)
 9.10 News with Martin Lewis. Sport and weather (900575)
 9.30 That's Life! Esther Rantzen and her team of reporters attempt to right more wrongs. (Ceefax) (s) (742391)
 10.10 Match of the Day. Desmond Lynam introduces highlights from two of today's Premier League matches. The commentators are John Motson and Barry Davies (s) (120943)
 11.10 Film: The Yakuza (1975). Explosive thriller starring Robert Mitchum as a former private investigator who travels to Japan to help a GI friend whose daughter has been kidnapped by gangsters. Directed by Sydney Pollack (933372). Wales: That's Showbusiness 11.40 Film: The Yakuza
 1.00 Weather (3115686). Wales: 1.30 Weather

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BBC2

6.40 Open University: Food Production: The Grain Story (4230681) 7.05 Maths (2021152) 7.30 Physics (4577001) 7.55 Changing Britain: Changing World (212117) 8.20 Joking Around: Fun and Games (5258730) 8.45 Wining and Dining: The World of Food (1354001) 9.10 Technology (9274988) 9.25 Motion: Newton's Laws (3621469) 10.00 The York Mystery Plays (6576681) 10.25 From Micro to Macro (3751643) 10.50 Frederick the Great (1234020) 11.15 Society and Social Science (7240498) 12.05 Questions about Behaviour (9226662) 12.30 History: What is its Future? (3214914) 12.55 Modern Art: Manet (5445048) 1.20 Genetics (9852117) 1.45 Working with Systems (78793440) 2.10 TV: Technological Impact (81783484) 2.35 Discovering 16th Century Strasbourg (2718020)
 3.00 Film: Sabrina Fair (1954, b/w). Romantic comedy with William Holden and Humphrey Bogart as brothers in romantic pursuit of chauffeur's daughter Audrey Hepburn. Cary Grant was a foil for the Bogart role and would have been far more suitable. Directed by Billy Wilder (5834020)
 4.40 World Bowls. The Midland Bank World Indoor championships from the Guild Hall in Preston (s) (9474198)
 5.50 Late Again. Highlights from The Late Show (s) (809117)
 6.30 Scrutiny. Nicholas Jones reports on the work of the House of Commons select committees. (Ceefax) (865)
 7.00 News and sport with Chris Lowe. Weather (577440) and 7.15 Sounds of the Seventies. A look back at "heavy" and "progressive" music, including performances by Free, Deep Purple, Jethro Tull and Yes (s) (158440)
 7.50 Fine Cut: Bitter Thorns
 ● CHOICE: Nick Gifford's documentary is a quiet, sympathetic study of a family which has lost everything, depends on the good will of others for its survival yet refuses to lose its dignity. The lambs, two parents and their four children, are Somalia farm slaves. Driven out of their home by war and drought, they are settled in a refugee camp across the border in Sudan. Gifford charts their arrival at the camp and their return to Eritrea three years later. It is a film with no commentary, title dialogue and the minimum of plot. But if nothing much happens on screen, then it does not happen in life either. The father has lost his animals and cannot work. Like the rest of the family, he can't find any work around for something to turn up. But he worries about the future of the children, who are thin and undernourished and vulnerable to disease (s) (917488)
 9.20 Moving Pictures. Howard Schuman presents a profile of Barry Levinson, director of The Natural, Rain Man and Good Morning, Vietnam, on the eve of the release of his new film Ties (715840)



Baseball fans: childhood sweetheart Glenn Close (10.10pm)

10.10 Film: The Natural (1984).
 ● CHOICE: The story of a thirties baseball star (Robert Redford) and his dream of making it to the big leagues of Roy of the Rovers but also strong echoes of the King Arthur legend. Like Arthur our hero is driven by a mystical force and he has his magic sword, a baseball bat called "Wonderboy". The mixture of sporting myth and a baseball that does not always make for a coherent narrative but this is a really engaging and fun film with Redford, Glenn Close and a really fine performance by Redford's country boy negotiating the tricky path to fame is a deceptively unassuming portrait, and a tremendous supporting cast includes Glenn Close as the hero's childhood sweetheart. The Natural was based on a 1952 novel by Bernard Malamud and directed by Barry Levinson, who is profiled in Moving Pictures at 9.20. (Ceefax) (s) (7777049)
 12.20am Film: Heat and Sunlight (1987, b/w). Low-budget and partly improvised drama from director-star Ray Nesson about a photographer who is convinced that his girlfriend is having an affair and embarks on a course of self-destruction. (Ceefax) (963191). Ends at 2.00

ITV LONDON

6.00 GMTV (8138440)
 9.25 What's Up Doc? Gary Anderson, the creator of Thunderbirds joins Pat Sharp and Andy Crane and Yvette Fielding (s) (67563204)
 11.30 Movies. Movies. Movies. Includes reviews of A River Runs Through It and Stay Tuned (6778)
 12.00 The ITV Chart Show. Featuring John Wille with "Missing You" (s) (s) (18178)
 1.00 News with Dermot Murnaghan. Weather (4828962) 1.05 London Today (4828933)
 1.10 Hard Time on Planet Earth. Comedy series following the fortunes of an alien exiled to Earth (6757285)
 2.05 WWC Worldwide Wrestling from America (7871391)
 2.40 Athletics. Live coverage of the IBSF Invitation meeting from Birmingham's National Indoor Arena (4074257)
 4.40 News with Dermot Murnaghan. Sports results and weather (4005339) 5.00 London Today and Sport (1384135)
 5.10 Beynatch. The perfectly formed Reguards of Los Angeles County parade the beaches in search of disaster. Mitch sets sail to capture a crew of modern-day pirates. (Teletext) (s) (1023914)
 6.00 Blind Date. Cilla Black plays cupid to more hopeful contestants and sees how last week's winners fared. (Teletext) (s) (96440)
 7.00 Barrymore. Michael Barrymore travels the length and breadth of the country in search of the public's hidden talents (285833)



Jailed for fraud: Richard Wilson and Sean Bean (7.45pm)

7.45 Inspector Morse: Absolute Conviction. John Thaw's morose Oxford detective and his sidekick Kevin Whately experience life on the other side of the track when, during their investigations into the possibly fraudulent activities of three businessmen, a convict with a connection to the case suddenly dies. With Sean Bean and Richard Wilson (s). (Teletext) (222135)
 9.45 Tarrant's Ten Years on TV. Another irreverent look at the world's (s) (448407)
 10.15 The Big Fight - Live! The WBO super-middleweight championship from Olympia in London between Britain's Chris Eubank and Lindell Holmes from America. The commentators are Rag Gutteridge and Jim Watt (s) (61049)
 11.05 News with Dermot Murnaghan. Weather (358933)
 11.25 Film: Puncture (1988). Salford Field as a housewife who, despite the obvious efforts of her husband (John Gielgud), has ambitions of becoming a stand-up comedian, helped and hindered by another aspiring comic Tom Hanks. Humour with a dark undertone, directed by David Seltzer (7238001)
 1.40am The Big E. Magazine programme for and about young Europeans, including guests Craig Charles and Peta Sprout (4739179) 2.40 Basketball: NBA Jam Session. Alan Byrd introduces action from America (677868)
 3.40 The New Music. A review of Canadian artists featured in 1992
 4.40 BPM. The latest news from the world of dance music (s) (5533989)
 5.30 ITN Morning News (73841). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

6.00 The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (s) (5001310) 6.25 Split and Hercules. Cartoon adventures of a cat and dog (800852) 6.40 Alfred J. Kwak. Animated tales of a musical duck (423049) 7.05 Kido. Fight (s) (4793983) 7.35 Jayce and the Wheeled Kido. Fight (s) (4793983) 7.55 Jayce and the Wheeled Warriors (s) (4561440) 8.00 Saved by the Bell. Lie in an American high school (81020) 8.30 High 5. Windsurfing (80391) 9.00 News high school (81020) 9.30 Channel 4 Rating: The Morning Line (4203594) (3662778) 9.15 Channel 4 Rating: International sports news (97730)
 10.00 Trans World Sport. International sports news (97730)
 11.00 Gazzetta Football Italia. Paul Gascoigne looks at England's World Cup qualifier against San Marino and previews Italy's game against Portugal (17534)
 12.00 Road Dreams. In the second part of Elliott Bristow's video diary of his 12-year trip across America he travels from the Dakotas to Las Vegas (s) (61407)
 12.30 Songs and Memories. Sajid Subzwari, a former navy man turned clairvoyant, talks to Zamine Sarfaraz (19391)
 1.00 Film: Return to Yesterday (1993, b/w). Dated and stagey drama starring Clive Brook as a bored malnourished idler who decides to play an anonymous role in a seaside repertory company. Directed by Robert Stevenson (8405049)
 2.15 Channel 4 Rating from Newcastle. Introduced by John Francome, 3.00 Newcastle Building Society "Nova Plus" Novices' Chase; 3.30 Newcastle Building Society Hurdle; 3.35 Tote Elder Handicap Chase; 4.10 Newcastle Brown Ale Top of the North Novices' Hurdle; 4.40 Newcastle Building Society Handicap Chase (42792440)
 5.05 Brookside. Omnibus edition (s). (Teletext) (s) (7718643)
 6.30 Right to Reply. Sharna McDonald introduces viewers' reaction to Sky's Diana: Her True Story and Channel 4's The Love Weekend. (Teletext) (s) (833)
 7.00 A Week in Politics presented by Vincent Hanna and Andrew Rawnsley. Includes Harriet Harman on the Labour party's economic policies (8865)



Scotland bound: canoeist Robert Forbes Perkins (8.00pm)

8.00 Adventures: One Man and His Boat
 ● CHOICE: Robert Forbes Perkins, an American naturalist from Boston, sets off by canoe in search of his Scottish ancestors. He starts on the Thames at Greenwich, moves north by way of canals, reaches a lift or two when water transport proves difficult and after 500 miles prepares to meet his kinsmen, the present Lord Forbes. It is a good-humoured and inconsequential journey which allows Perkins to reflect on environments very different from those of his usual stamping grounds, Siberia and the Canadian Arctic. His meditations on the British character do not go very deep and it is surprising, given the peg for the film, that there is not more about his family history. But Perkins is an unusually pleasant, not averse to a little self-mockery, and he is the first to admit that he is more interested in nature than in people. (Teletext) (4285)
 9.00 Tales from the Hollywood Hills: Netica Jackson. The first of six dramas based on short stories by leading American writers of the thirties. Michelle Pfeiffer stars in John O'Hara's tale of a young actress who appears to have everything (s) (4049)
 10.00 Saturday Zoo. Denny DeVito joins Jonathan Ross as his special guest, Plus Steven Seagal (s) (7138)
 11.00 Ready Steady Go! (b/w). The classic radio show this week features George Farn, Lulu, P.J. Proby and Jerry Lee Lewis (920662)
 11.35 Adult Oprah. Oprah Winfrey talks to people whose lives were affected by last year's Los Angeles riots (392665)
 12.30am Film: The Great Gatsby (1974). Handsome but dramatically underpowered adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel starring Tobey Maguire as the enigmatic millionaire Jay Gatsby and Mia Farrow as his former love. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and directed by Britain's Jack Clayton (8205421)
 3.05 The Word (s) (6738889). Ends at 4.05

SATellite

SKY ONE
 6.00am Dragon Bay (47310) 6.30am Film: Tin Tin (16091) 7.00am Film: Factory (30331) 12.00am Barney Jones (61178) 1.00am Film: Rich Man, Poor Man (47198) 2.00am Concorde (6556) 2.30am Film: Life (555) 3.00am Concorde (6556) (50198) 4.00am The Dukes of Hazzard (52333) 5.00am WWP Superstars of Wrestling (6413) 6.00am Beverly Hills, 90210 (60262) 7.00am Knights and Warriors (10697) 8.00am Unleashed Mykelti (80827) 9.00am Cops (16117) 9.30am Cops (16117) 10.00am All-American Wrestling (50333) 11.00am Saturday Night Live (5492) 12.00am Pages from Skyline

SKY MOVIES+
 6.00am Showcases (81952)
 6.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 7.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 7.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 8.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 8.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 9.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 9.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 10.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 10.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 11.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 11.30am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177) 12.00am The Last Remains of Boston Globe (18177)

SKY NEWS
 News on the hour.
 6.00am Start (45523) 6.30am News and Business Report (65438) 9.30am Nightline (46498) 10.30am Financial Times West of

11.30am Gateway (19489) 12.30am Gateway (19489) 1.30am The Reporter (10310) 2.30am Nightline (44594) 3.30am Those Were the Days (20295) 4.30am Gateway (19489) 5.00am Live from Five (30949) 6.30am Fashion TV (20298) 7.20am The Reporter (6091) 9.30am Financial Times West of (10310) 10.30am The Reporter (6091) 11.30am Fashion TV (20298) 12.30am Gateway (19489) 1.30am The Reporter (6091) 2.30am Nightline (44594) 3.30am Those Were the Days (20295) 4.30am Gateway (19489) 5.00am Live from Five (30949) 6.30am Fashion TV (20298) 7.20am The Reporter (6091) 9.30am Financial Times West of (10310) 10.30am The Reporter (6091) 11.30am Fashion TV (20298) 12.30am Gateway (19489) 1.30am The Reporter (6091) 2.30am Nightline (44594) 3.30am Those Were the Days (20295) 4.30am Gateway (19489) 5.00am Live from Five (30949) 6.30am Fashion TV (20298) 7.20am The Reporter (6091) 9.30am Financial Times West of (10310) 10.30am The Reporter (6091) 11.30am Fashion TV (20298) 12.30am Gateway (19489) 1.30am The 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SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20 1993

SUNDAY TELEVISION AND RADIO

1X 19

BBC1

- 7.00 Felix the Cat (5503044) 7.15 Smoggy (5503044) 7.40 Playdays (5503044) 7.55 Superbooks (5503044) 8.15 Breakfast with Frost. David Frost talks to Lord Tubb and David Meller. MP Plus a review of the day's national papers (5503044) 9.15 The Good Book Guide Series on the Bible (5503044) 10.00 See Hear With singing and subtitles (5503044) 10.30 Japanese Language and subtitles (5503044) 11.00 Computing for the Tenth (5503044) 11.30 See Hear With singing and subtitles (5503044) 12.00 Country File with John Craven (5503044) 12.15 Weather (5503044) 1.00 News (5503044) 1.05 On the Record. Health secretary Virginia Bottomley is interviewed by Nick Ross (5503044) 2.00 EastEnders. Omnibus edition (5503044) 3.00 Film: Irreconcilable Differences (1984). Comedy with a sharp edge starring Ryan O'Neal and Shelley Long as self-absorbed screenwriters whose daughter (Drew Barrymore) sues them for divorce. Directed by Charles Shyer (5503044) 4.50 Ullatime. Anne Doherty appears on behalf of the Rainbow Trust. Children's Charity (5503044) 5.00 The Clothes Show (5503044) 5.25 Antiques Roadshow from Macclesfield (5503044) 6.10 News (5503044) 6.30 As Time Goes By. Judy Dench and Geoffrey Palmer star as a middle-aged couple discovering love can be sweeter the second time around (5503044) 7.00 As Time Goes By (5503044)



Arms dealers: Ian McShane and Leslie Phillips (7.30pm)

- 7.30 Lovejoy: The Galloping Major. Ian McShane's roguish antiquities dealer stumbles on a 17th-century cannon and seeks the advice of Major Edward Turpin (Leslie Phillips) (5503044) 8.25 Last of the Summer Wine. Another inconsequential ramble in the Yorkshire Dales in the company of Bill Owen, Peter Sallis and Brian Wilde (5503044) 8.55 One Foot in the Grave. Richard Wilson's Victor finds yet more to grumble about as wife Margaret (Annette Crosbie) embarks on a reckless adventure (5503044) 9.25 News with Maryn Lewis (5503044) 9.40 Mastermind. Magnus Magnusson puts questions on the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy, Lord Macaulay, Devia Murphy and railway signalling in Britain (5503044) 10.10 Evermann See No Evil. The Suez Canal and Shatila Massacre. On September 16, 1982, a force of Christian Lebanese militiamen entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Beirut. During the next 26 hours an estimated 2,000 were killed while the militia's Israeli allies surrounded the camps. This programme explores the legacy of the massacre (5503044) 11.00 Winning. David Hall examines the secret of small business success (5503044) 11.30 Famously Fluent. Left Vaz, MP, uses British sign language (734228) 11.35 Elephant Games. A look at the annual celebrations at Thailand's Elephant Festival (734228) 12.05am Weather (7014193) 12.05 Famously Fluent 12.05 Elephant Games 12.35 News and weather

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BBC2

- 6.40 Open University: Introduction to Pure Maths: Symmetry (4207353) 7.05 TV — The Global Impact (4210214) 7.30 Creative Management (4544773) 7.55 The York Mystery Plays (9186868) 8.20 Henry IV Parts One and Two (5225402) 8.45 Open Advice (1321773) 9.10 Christopher Crocodile (5141121) 9.15 The Animals of Farmington Wood (5141121) 9.40 Time Busters (5141121) 10.05 Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (5141121) 10.30 Century Falls (5141121) 10.55 Blue Peter. Omnibus edition (5141121) 11.45 The Ozone with Charles and Eddie. Take That and Midge Ure (5141121) 12.00 Thunderbirds. Classic puppet series (5141121) 12.30 The Invaders. Vintage science-fiction series (5141121) 1.40 World Bowls. Douglas Bennett introduces coverage of the second round of the singles in the Midland Bank World Indoor championships from the Guild Hall in Preston (5141121) 2.00 Regional Westminster Programmes (9082). Northern Ireland: County Times; Wales: Week in Week Out 2.30 Millenniums. Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World. David Maybury-Lewis examines how the spiritual resources drawn on by the Mexican Huichol and the Australian Aboriginals complement modern science and medicine (5141121) 3.25 World Bowls. Further coverage from Preston (5141121) 4.35 Sky Sunday. David Vine and Julian Tait report on how the gold medals were won at the Alpine world championships in Morioka-Shizukushi, Japan (123711) 5.10 Rugby Special. Highlights of the games between Scotland and Wales and Ireland and France (5141121) 5.10 The Natural World: The Great Bears of Alaska. A documentary about the brown bears of Alaska, who sleep away the bitter winter and then cram all their activity into the six kinder months (5141121) 6.00 The Money Programme. Tom Maddocks reports on why Italian car maker Fiat has embarked on an £18 billion programme to build new factories and replace its model range (142976) 7.40 The Adventurers. Grosvenor Venture Managers have funded a holiday company and a small chemical factory but are now at odds with them (5141121) 8.20 Dancing. New Worlds. A look at the African movements which have formed the basis of popular European dances. Narrated by Miranda Richardson (5141121) 9.20 Did You See...? Jeremy Paxman is joined by Janet Cohn, banker and former civil servant, Richard Gregory, professor of neuropsychology at Brunel University, and Andrew Davies, novelist and screenwriter. They discuss Public Eye Special: Cohn on the Dole, The Secret Life of the Fox Machine and Diana: Her True Story (5141121)



Unruly inheritance: Ralph Fiennes and Archie (10.00pm)

- 10.00 Screen Two: The Cormorant
● CHOICE: Stephen Groom's novel about a family torn apart by a sea bird comes smoothly to the screen with the help of the BBC Natural History Unit. It is an unlikely story, though one which starts to take on its own logic. John (Ralph Fiennes) brings his wife Mary (Helen Schlesinger) and young son to a gloomy cottage in Snowdonia which he has inherited from a potty uncle. The condition is that the family looks after his pet cormorant. Archie proves to be a unruly pet, biting fingers and defecating over the carpet. Mary demands that the bird be put down. The film is narrated by the memory of childhood days spent with the uncle and cannot bring himself to do it. Peter Ransley supplies a serviceable script and footage of four cormorants is mixed to produce the disruptive Archie (52528) 11.30 The Dave Thomas Show. The award-winning American comedy writer is joined in the first of his sketch series by John Candy (52528) 11.55 Film: L'Argent (1983, b/w). Typically spare and inclusive drama from the master French director Robert Bresson about a boy who hands over a forged note and sets off a chain reaction of deceit and murder. In French with English subtitles. (771179). Ends at 12.00am

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 GMTV (8160112) 9.25 Disney Club with Paul Orford, Andrea Boardman and Paul Hendy (890470) 10.45 Link. Siân Vasey with the first of a two-part report on the need for legal protection for disabled people (Teletext) (8459357) 11.00 Morning Worship from Park United Reform Church in Halifax (85402) 12.00 Package Pilgrimage. Anne Gregg visits Assisi (Teletext) (515353) 12.30 Crossroads. Health minister Dr. Brian Mawhinney discusses the government's response to the Tomlinson report with Peter Allen and MPs David Mallett and Tony Banks (13247) 1.00 News with Dermot Mulroney. Weather (8038842) 1.10 Walden. Brian Walden asks Lord Tubb if the Tory Euro-sceptics can still stop the Maastricht treaty (515353) 2.00 The Sportsman. Armistead (3866) 2.30 The London Match. Ian St. John introduces live coverage of the game between West Ham United and Newcastle United from Upton Park (515353) 3.00 Wish You Were Here...? Reports on a South African safari. Manchester and tourist damage in the Alps (515353) 5.30 Bullseye. Jim Bowen presents the darts and general knowledge game show (57) 8.00 London Tonight presented by Fiona Foster (750402) 8.20 News with Julia Somerville. Weather (842044)



Surrogate fathers: Guttenberg, Selleck, Danson (8.30pm)

- 8.30 Film: Three Men and a Cradle (1987). Smart and funny comedy starring Tom Selleck, Steve Guttenberg and Ted Danson as three bachelors sharing an apartment who are thrown into a frenzy when a baby girl is left on their doorstep. Directed by Leonard Nimoy. (Teletext) (515353) 8.25 Wrestling. New series of Jim Hightchum's comedy series about a me-matched couple, starring Emma Wray and Paul Bown. (Teletext) (430641) 8.55 News with Julia Somerville. Weather (815268) 9.20 Agatha Christie's Poirot: The Chocolate Box. The dapper detective returns to his native Belgium for the first time since the first world war and finds an old case of murder still needing to be solved. (Teletext) (45471) 10.20 Hale and Pace. More irreverent humour from Gareth and Norman (512605) 10.50 The South Bank Show. ● CHOICE: The subjects of this friendly dual profile are two Russian musicians. Dmitri Sitkovetsky is the classical violinist who escaped to the West during the oppressive Soviet regime and now lives in London. His cousin, Sasha, is the rock guitarist whose band made the only Soviet contribution to the Live Aid concert. He has stayed in Russia. The film brings them together on the Latvian coast, scene of childhood summer holidays, and charts their rehearsal and performance of "Tribute Bolero" a new piece written by Sasha for the programme. Looking more than ever like a wizened bard, Sir Yehudi Menuhin draws on his Russian roots for an appreciation of Dmitri, though there is no similar rock experience to do the honours for Sasha. It is a gentle and moving portrait of a man, aged nine, seems set to carry on the tradition (5141204) 11.50 Encounter: Sackcloth and Ashes? An investigation into the meaning of Lent (565976) 12.00am The Music. Mike Mansfield introduces the second part of Simple Minds in concert in Verona (939532) 1.25am The Music. Mike Mansfield introduces the second part of Simple Minds in concert in Verona (939532) 1.25am The Music. Mike Mansfield introduces the second part of Simple Minds in concert in Verona (939532) 3.30 Snooker. Steve Davis takes on Jimmy White in the European League (50603) 5.30 ITN Morning News (99919). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Trans World Sport (5250763) 6.55 Spiff and Hercules (7242315) 7.05 Widgey (5141121) 7.30 Sandokan (17824) 8.00 The Hammerman (1702088) 8.25 The Finder. Drama series (5218941) 8.50 Dennis (5293179) 9.00 Tintin (73131) 9.30 Dennis (5141121) 9.45 Flipper. Adventures of the friendly dolphin (362599) 10.15 The Miraculous Mellips. Fantasy drama series (387808) 10.45 Land of the Giants. Vintage science-fiction series (5157247) 11.45 Little House on the Prairie. The trials and tribulations of a close-knit Kansas plains family starring Michael Landon (506131) 12.45 The Great American Bike Race. In July 1991 30 cyclists embarked on a race across America (5141121) 1.45 Film: Conquest of Space (1955). Dornbeach science fiction story starring Walter Brooks as the captain of a space station on an assignment to land on Mars. Directed by Byron Haskin (520822) 3.15 Film: Big Deal at Dodge City (1965). Entertaining western starring Henry Fonda as a farmer who buys into a poker game. After a heart attack he persuades his wife (Joanne Woodward) to play his hand. Directed by Fielder Cook (8429833) 5.00 Conquest of Space (1955). Dornbeach science fiction story starring Walter Brooks as the captain of a space station on an assignment to land on Mars. Directed by Byron Haskin (520822) 5.10 News and weather (258771) 5.15 High Interest. Art and Mark investigate how the influx of East Asian Asians in the '80s changed Britain's way of life (1006247) 6.00 MovieFest. Birmingham's cinema-goes review Lorenzo's Oil, Honeymoon in Vegas, Under Siege and Leon the Pig (112) 6.30 The Wonder Years. American life in the early 'seventies as seen through the eyes of a teenage boy. (Teletext) (732) 7.00 Fragile Earth: Minefield. Maurice Blackadder-Johnston runs a mine-cleaning company that is teaching Somalis how to disarm the discarded mines that are littering their country. (Teletext) (4247) 8.00 Opinions: Britain 1993. In the first in a six-part series former defence minister, Alan Clark, argues that successive governments have hastened the national decline by taking soft options (1569) 8.30 Benny Hill Completions. The first of a six-part series (3421)



Period piece: Louise Gormaine, Douglas Henshall (9.00pm)

- 9.00 Upstick On Your Collar
● CHOICE: Dennis Potter's drama does for the fifties what his Pennies From Heaven did for the thirties and The Singing Detective for the forties. It is another incisive and individual period portrait, which puts the emphasis on class and sex and has the characters mining to popular songs. Partly about British Imperial pretensions and partly an exploration of sexual awakening, Upstick opens in the Suez year of 1956. Potter's alter ego is a gauche young national serviceman (Giles Thomas) who becomes besotted with a Diana Dors lookalike (Louise Gormaine) married to a bullying corporal (Douglas Henshall). This opening episode is a shade repetitious but redeemed by a glorious rendition of "Garden of Eden" by War Office bureaucrats. Those who find Potter's work offensive will not be disappointed (253293) 9.10 Film: Withnail and I (1986). ● CHOICE: This is the network television premiere for writer-director Bruce Robinson's fresh and original dark comedy based on his experiences as a struggling actor in the 1960s. Paul McGann, of The Monocled Mutineer, and Richard E. Grant, play out of work thespians who share a filthy London flat and keep themselves going with drink and drugs. According to the Lake District to play with Grant's uncle (Richard Griffiths), the pair have a run-in with a crazed poacher (Michael Elphick) and are forced to repel the uncle's homosexual advances. It was Robinson's directing debut, after small acting roles and an Oscar nomination for his script for The Killing Fields. His writing is sharp and witty and he draws superb performances from Grant as the assertive Withnail and McGann as the more supine "I" (70334) 12.10am Film: Gushwater (1992). A season of African films opens with a powerful indictment of corruption and religious intolerance by the Senegalese director Ousmane Sembene. In Senegalese with English subtitles (3385632). Ends at 2.15

VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
As London except: 12.30pm-1.00 Food Court (327812) 2.00 Cartoon Time (5125257) 2.15 Highway to Heaven (442121) 3.15 Film: One Tree Hill (5125257) 3.30 The Village Show (5125257) 3.45 News (5125257) 4.00 The Village Show (5125257) 4.15 News (5125257) 4.30 The Village Show (5125257) 4.45 News (5125257) 5.00 The Village Show (5125257) 5.15 News (5125257) 5.30 The Village Show (5125257) 5.45 News (5125257) 6.00 The Village Show (5125257) 6.15 News (5125257) 6.30 The Village Show (5125257) 6.45 News (5125257) 7.00 The Village Show (5125257) 7.15 News (5125257) 7.30 The Village Show (5125257) 7.45 News (5125257) 8.00 The Village Show (5125257) 8.15 News (5125257) 8.30 The Village Show (5125257) 8.45 News (5125257) 9.00 The Village Show (5125257) 9.15 News (5125257) 9.30 The Village Show (5125257) 9.45 News (5125257) 10.00 The Village Show (5125257) 10.15 News (5125257) 10.30 The Village Show (5125257) 10.45 News (5125257) 11.00 The Village Show (5125257) 11.15 News (5125257) 11.30 The 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Parading too many identities

Lynne Truss gets lost in a confusing welter of dubious lookalikes and characters in search of authority



THE identity crisis is not such a fashionable condition as it used to be. A few years ago, if you weren't having an identity crisis, you were nobody. This

week, however, it was possible to observe some quite severe identity problems just sitting at home and watching the telly, especially if you were able to see the two-part *Diana: Her True Story* (Sunday and Tuesday, Sky One), or *French and Saunders* (Thursday, BBC2), or *Without Walls: P.A. Accuse Dame Edna Everage* (Tuesday, Channel 4), or *The Michael Jackson Interview* (Monday, BBC2). Through-out all these crazy mixed-up programmes, the plaintive cry of "Who's that? Surely it's not —?" rang out repeatedly in my house, followed by low whimpers of confusion.

The worst crisis hit when I was showing highlights from Michael Jackson to a neighbour. "Look," I said, "this is quite amazing." And I spooled forward to the point where the spooky white-faced Jackson talks about his mother and dad. "My mother is perfection," he piped, in that strange soft girly voice, just as a still photograph of a dark-skinned man and a lighter-skinned woman appeared on the screen. I freeze-framed the picture triumphantly.

"See?" I yelled, a mad glint in my eye. "D'you see?" "See what?" said my neighbour. "He wants to be his mother!" I shouted. "His mother looks exactly like him! Look, even the stray lock of hair down her face, the same eyebrows, everything! It's his mother he's turning into!"

"But that's not his mother, it's him."

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"What?"
"That's a picture of Michael Jackson and his dad."

"Is it?"
I felt weightless, suddenly. I gaped. For heaven's sake, I had just spent several hours establishing beyond a shadow of doubt that Michael Jackson's new white face was identical to Michael Jackson's new white face in a photo. I wondered whether it was time to bail out of this TV reviewing business before serious damage was done.

The trouble is that superficial resemblance can serve all sorts of purposes on television, and occasionally one gets confused. For example, when French and Saunders dress up as Shakespeares Sister, as they did this week, obviously the purpose is just to get a laugh. Simple as that. Later in the series we are promised a *House of Eliott* sketch, in which they appear as Bea and Evie wearing exact replicas of *House of Eliott* clothes, replicating the *House of Eliott* hair-styles, and cunningly saving buckets of money by filming the entire thing on *House of Eliott* sets. What they do with all this hard-earned verisimilitude is almost immaterial. The joke is funny already.

Yet sometimes when you see lookalikes, you are not supposed to laugh. On *Without Walls*, Rory Bremner dressed up as Dame Edna Everage, and the viewer was quite emphatically instructed not to laugh, because it wasn't funny. The thesis of this utterly uncalculated *P.A. Accuse* was that Dame Edna no longer has a satiric edge, and has become an unleashed monster, vicious and out of control. Do I hear you say "So what?" That's

funny, so did I. Do I also hear you say that Rory Bremner's impression of Dame Edna isn't terribly good? Well, I said that, too.

While Bremner certainly had some good points to make about his fellow artiste, a *P.A. Accuse* was quite the wrong way to make them. With its expert witnesses, its oratory and its incriminating clips, *P.A. Accuse* is the arts-programme equivalent of a public stoning, and is usually reserved for people who are safely dead. Bremner didn't even follow the usual rubric of the series, which is to attack the reputation rather than the artist. His assault was totally *ad hominem* (although in a spooky, *ad feminam* kind of way, of course), and he conducted it very much as though it were a public duty rather than a matter of opinion. In the context of all this, then, his impersonation of Edna was simply mean.

Why all this stuff about impersonations? Well, it was, of course, the big question hanging over the mini-series *Diana: Her True Story* — would the superficial resemblance between actors and originals be a bonus or a handicap? In other words, would David Threlfall (as the Prince of Wales) diligently talking out of the side of his mouth, like Popeye, convince the viewer that this story was the truth (not that that, or just make us laugh uncontrollably? In the event, I am pleased to say, there was no contest. French and Saunders couldn't have done it better. *Diana: Her True Story* was skin-deep drama pushed to its shallowest limit, with Prince Charles not only conversing with rhubarb, but apparently allowing the rhubarb to write his lines.

To be fair, the pleasurable shock



Royal masks: who are those vaguely familiar caricatures hiding behind Serena Scott Thomas, David Threlfall and Anne Stallybrass?

of recognition ("Why, isn't that Princess Anne?") is a very small dramatic effect on which to build a four-hour drama packed with dialogue that the audience knows already ("monstrous carbuncle", and so on), so I suppose you've got to hand it to them, they did it.

Based on Andrew Morton's book of the same name, *Diana: Her True Story* might best be described as *Rebecca* with flag-wavers. Young timid inexperienced girl marries older man with higher social standing; gets terrorised by the servants; feels trapped indoors; goes crazy with jealousy of man's former love (Rebecca/Camilla); in-

cur's husband's wrath by wearing inappropriate flouncy frock to first big party; occasionally breaks ornaments. There are also subtle differences of plot, of course, because at *Rebecca*'s finale, Manderley blazes dramatically against a night sky, and — but hang on, perhaps the resemblance is a bit too striking, after all.

Curiously, however, other striking resemblances in *Diana: Her True Story* were a bit thin on the ground. It is one of the main paradoxes of this kind of lookalike exercise, actually, that the casting director is damned if he does, damned if he doesn't, and pilloried

for half measures in between. Which is just another reason, surely, why it is not worth doing. So, while David Threlfall's Prince of Wales was a full-blown caricature (well done, but still ludicrous), the glimpsed Princess Margaret was a mere chintzy-frock-and-tiara job (a hoot), and the Queen Mother a tiny whispering curly-haired woman in ruffled blues, whom no amount of cat-calls from the viewer, apparently, could persuade to desist.

The confusions and feelings of disbelief surrounding this piece were numerous. Who, I wondered (for ages), was that Mysterious Old Cove who seemed to be hanging

around the Queen all the time, and gatecrashing important family dinners? It's him. I kept saying: he's there again. Well, blow me, it turned out to be the Duke of Edinburgh.

If it seems perverse to judge *Diana: Her True Story* by its appearances, I would reply that only fair to take it on its own terms. I hope, by the way, that I have not given the impression that I didn't enjoy it. There were some excellent lookalike frocks, and even some interesting lookalike newspapers, with titles such as *The Informer* and *The Echo*. And the corps, one and all, were excellent.

A walk on the wild side of lobsters

Without Walls: The Art of Tripping (Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm)

It was Lily Tomlin, I believe, who said that reality is a crutch for people who can't cope with drugs (*Lynne Truss* writes). I have a shrewd idea that this two-part film about the influence of hallucinogenic drugs on "Culture" — i.e. on such eccentric bores as Anaïs Nin and William Burroughs — will peddle much the same line.

However, *The Art of Tripping* certainly takes a comprehensive sweep through the territory, cataloguing heaps of good actors to portray the great literary opium-eaters, from Thomas de Quincy to the present day. I have a mental picture of a lot of inert Victorians with glazed expressions lying about on sofas, but since this wouldn't make particularly good telly, we shall have to wait and see.

Let's hope, anyway, that it clears up the mystery of Gérard de Nerval's habit of taking a lobster for a walk in the Tuilleries, attached to a long blue ribbon. Was he

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acting under a tragic drug-induced misapprehension as to the lobster's identity?

Timewatch: The Secret F.B.I. on J. Edgar Hoover (Wednesday, BBC2, 8.10pm)

In these cynical times of ours, there is an ever-widening category of dastardly doings that, the minute you hear about them for the first time, you feel you've known for ever.

The revelations about the great FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover — that he was blackmailed by the Mafia, who had pictures of him wearing a frock and engaging in oral sex with his (male) assistant — fall directly into this category. I find, making scarcely a ripple on the surface. Of course he was corrupt. Of course he wore frocks. He was the head of the FBI, for goodness' sake.

Wildlife on One: Backstreet Bandits (Thursday, BBC1, 8pm)

A repeat of a great wildlife film, first shown two years ago, in which the urban racoon of North America is revealed as a kind of streetwise Top Cat figure, shuffling down alleys like it owned the joint. Its attitude to scavenging has none of the furtiveness one normally expects from small defenceless furry animals: it just marches up to dustbins and slings off the lids, with an almost audible mutter of "What's that? Gimme that."

The most memorable scene, as I recall, involves a woman in Toronto, who daily opens her patio doors and invites the raccoons in for a light supper of crunchy pellets. Poor sap. NB: while she talks about them being cute, they are mooching about in her living-room, picking up objects, eyeing-up the pictures. It is only a short evolutionary step, one feels, before they are slipping cigarette lighters into their pockets and sinking out into the night.

The love that revived the Beloved

Waxing lyrical, Jon Marsh explains the Beloved's three-year absence



few nerve endings, and became instead an icon — that flashlit blur of features turned into a visual shorthand for love and peace and people getting together right now.

It was just after the Acid summer of love, see everyone was looking for new heroes — preferably ones that didn't mind scuffling around in flotation tanks for their videos and nearly falling out of trees for photo shoots. And Marsh had these big blue eyes, and half a dozen cracking songs about peace and love and getting together right now, and the kind of long long hair Vidal Sassoon weeps about in his sleep. Obviously he and his band, the Beloved, were going to be famous.

Their music wore the mood of the time effortlessly: "Hello" got them on *Top of the Pops*; the slinksome "Time After Time" saw a few thousand posters of Marsh and fellow Beloved member Steve Waddington Sellotaped to discerning teenagers' walls, and the beautiful "Sun Rising" ensured them a particularly sumptuous place in heaven.

"Sun Rising" was a cold-sweat drift through the beginning of the dawn; people wandered off, blasted from the dance floors, and out into the cold new day with "Sun Rising" playing on an endless loop in their heads. It was a glide through the euphoria created in escaping sleep all night and, ugh, it was on an Alpen advert as well.

The Beloved were everybody's favourite "left field pop/dance type band", as Marsh describes them. And



Back in sweet harmony: Marsh, shown of his flowing locks

then? And then they promptly did absolutely nothing at all, on a regular basis, for about three years.

Oh, sure, there was a remix album — *Blissed Out* — but I daresay Glenda Jackson could knock out a remix album without too much effort. No, the Beloved stubbornly did nothing for three years, and the world was left to chew on its fingernails, then its knuckles, and finally the stumps of its arms until "Sweet Harmony", the new single, bobbed up in the Top Ten a few weeks back, looking suspiciously perky and perfect, and trailing a new album, *Conscience*, behind it.

So where, by Jupiter, have they been all this time, and what has Marsh done to his once flowing tresses? "It's a fairly straightforward story," he says. His eyes are very blue, but his hair is very short. "Steve left the band because, well, we'd ceased to be reliant on each other. We had a big lunch and decided it was all over, and I've not really seen him since. And then I got married to Helena and she and, well, we started recording this album."

Marsh is, indeed, fairly goopy over his new wife and band member. He'd fancied her for ages before, but when they were introduced by a mutual friend at a nightclub "it was equal measures of lust and love on both sides". And from this rare and perfect love

was fashioned the recent single "Sweet Harmony", the video for which was banned from our television screens. This was because it featured "loads of naked birds" as one, now ex-friend of mine put it. The women had their nipples discreetly covered with masking tape, and it was all supposed to be very innocent and beautiful, but it was, none the less, kept from view.

"I think it was the combination of the lyrics and the images," Marsh says thoughtfully, chewing on a red pepper. His hair is now very short. "I mean, the lyrics run 'Let's come together, right now, oh yeah, in sweet harmony'. That's a dubious coupling for many. Really it's just as well we weren't sampling The Beatles 'Come together, right now, over me'. That would definitely have been advocating some kind of mutual experience, which I don't think the Broadcasting Standards Council would have looked on too kindly."

So the video wasn't some kind of arrogant gesture for loads of notoriety and publicity? "Oh, God, no," Marsh says. "I don't think I could be very arrogant now at all. I visited ultra-arrogance, I've been there once. And when you've been there, you don't want to go back again in a hurry. You burn it out, cauterise it, leave no trace. I'm, hopefully, a well-balanced and fairly pleasant person to be with now." He grins.

So, Jon. Finally. Why did you cut your lovely hair?

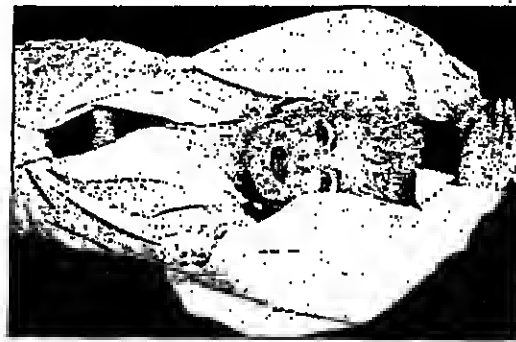
"Oh, I went on holiday and it was too hot, so I had it stripped. No great mystery there," he says.

CAITLIN MORAN

• The Beloved's new album, *Conscience*, is out now on Eastwest Records.

GUILTY SECRETS

Margi Clarke, actor



"I don't watch a lot of TV — I'm more of a reader. If anything I tend to watch political programmes like *Question Time* and *Newsnight*. Mmm... I love that Jeremy Paxman. The trouble is I'm so busy studying that wonderful nose of his that I miss all the exciting political points that are going down."

• Margi Clarke presents *The Good Sex Guide* on ITV

WORD WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

WEDELN

a. Nordic permafrost tundra

b. Austrian edelweiss braces

c. Skiing by swerving

LAMDAN

a. A Talmudic scholar

b. A lame-brain

c. An Indian paddock

COCCUM

a. Lucky, advantageous

b. Chilli chutney

c. A housekeeper

RESILIUM

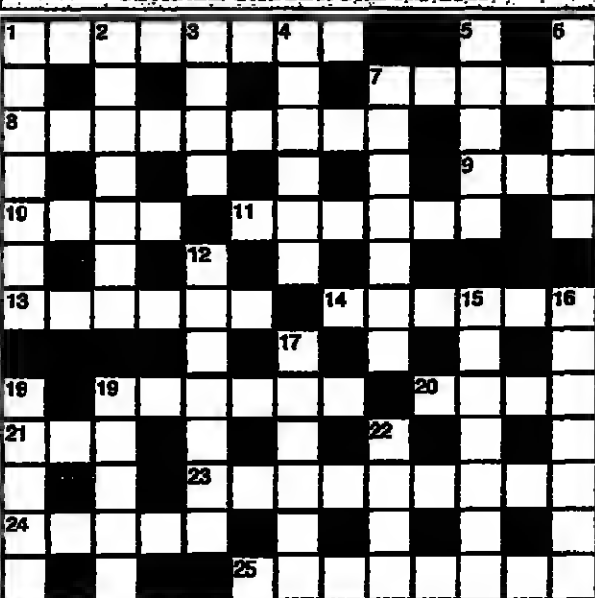
a. A Papist council

b. Hinge of a bivalve

c. The political opposition

Answers on page 15

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO. 3027



ACROSS

1 Heaven (8)

7 Add (3,2)

8 Risk provoking (5,4)

9 Flying saucer (1,1,1)

10 Salute (4)

11 Fracture support (6)

13 Struggle (6)

14 Redeem (6)

19 Shape (6)

20 Not fat (4)

21 Paddle (3)

23 Plane triallist (4,5)

24 Suspicious (5)

25 Whirlpool motions (8)

DOWN

1 Quick casual shot (7)

2 Corpse (7)

3 Romantic assignation (4)

4 Marshes (6)

5 Thick-bodied (5)

6 Back hair hat (5)

7 Pouch-billed bird (7)

12 Capricious (7)

15 Varnish resin (7)

16 Meeting notes (7)

17 Wet plaster painting (6)

18 Brag (5)

19 Mendicant brother (5)

22 Rosiererie (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 3026

ACROSS: 7 Help 8 Unhorsed 9 Mirror 10 Points

11 Punt 12 Grudging 15 Mediator 17 Cage 18 Credit

21 Sanity 22 Sedation 23 Pawn

DOWN: 1 Pedicure 2 Spirit 3 Put right 4 Shop 5 Try-

ing 6 Pelt 13 Uprising 14 Night owl 16 In drag 17 Can-

opy 19 Reel 20 Thin

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